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Decadence

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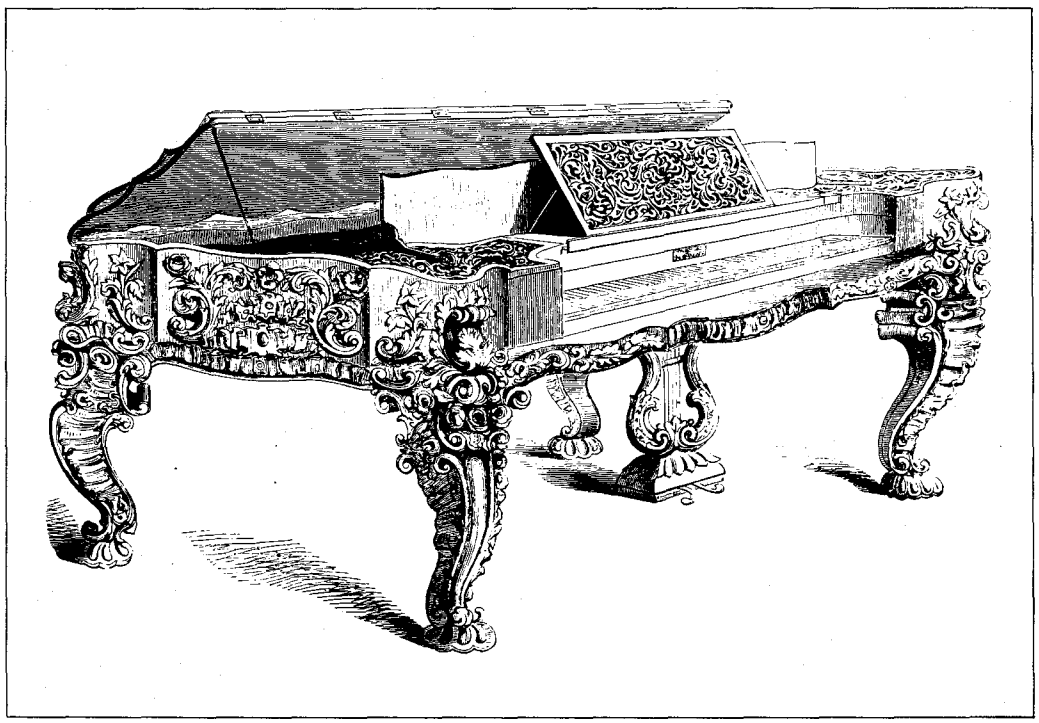
Decadence



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COMMENT

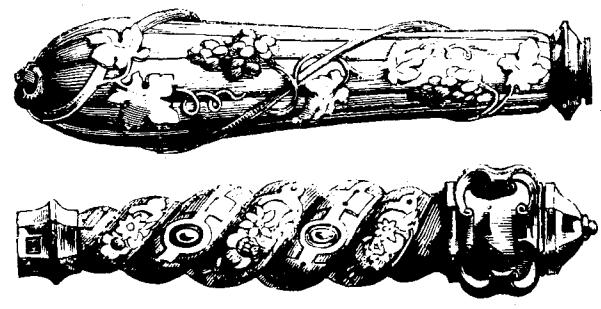
Decline, decay, the falling away from a former excellence. All the conventional definitions of decadence are negative on their face. The term *denotes* a state of decline, but it also *connotes* an enlightened view of that decline on the part of the user, who is sophisticated, worldly-wise, and never ever shocked. A very respectable hotel advertises its bar as "elegant, with just a touch of decadence." "Oh, you are so decadent!" says the lady in the restaurant upon his suggesting that they break the diet and have a hot fudge sundae for dessert. These appear to be innocent uses of decadence, and perhaps they are. Decadence is but a little fling, kicking up one's heels, winking at the minor rules, an antidote to dullness. Decadence is fun. In a world that is so short on fun, no *feeling* person wants to be a spoilsport. And yet . . . fun is whimsy, humor, jest, parody, and play—but decadence? In the cultural trickle-down that produces the popular equation between decadence and fun we can detect the three more sober and sobering faces of decadence: the liberationist, the hermetic, and the tragic. Or they might better be understood as the three masks of the one reality that is—not to put too fine a point on it—death.

Liberationist decadence was popularized through the misnamed counterculture that emerged in the late 1960's. It sometimes couples with the hard liberationism of revolutionary change, but never satisfactorily so. Herbert Marcuse's revolution and Norman O. Brown's polymorphous perversity were unnaturally yoked in "The Movement." There were tactical reasons for the hurried coupling, but the affair could not last. The Marxist proposition requires discipline in the long struggle toward the kingdom of freedom, whereas polymorphous perversity is the "realized eschatology" of the kingdom's present availability in the defiance of all present limits (i.e., "Freedom Now!"). What the hard liberationism of the revolution and the soft liberationism of the counterculture have in common, however, is an opposition to a prevailing culture that they view as dead and deadening. Those whom we view as decadents have their own theories about the decadence to which they believe they are reacting. Our vitalities are their evidences of decay. They demand freedom from the disease that we call health.

Max Weber, that magisterial social theorist, analyzed the discontents of modernity that would produce what might be viewed as a counterdecadence. Rationalization, specialization, bureaucratization— these, he said, produce the "disenchantment" of a world in which system, procedure, and impersonality are worshipped. What Weber saw as a doleful future others declared to be the oppressive present of "the system." In that declaration Theodore Roszak correctly perceived "the making of a counter culture." We can only breathe free, it was maintained, if we transcend the rules and disown the authority of the stifling past by which they are imposed. This is liberation from the pervasive decadence of our inherited world. The counterculture was not an alternative culture, for it produced no comprehensive and compelling "meaning systems" of myth, story, mores, and coherent truth claims by which life could be ordered. And it could not long remain even as a counterculture when the culture it intended to counter, and which therefore gave it definition, showed signs of collapsing under the assault. Nor could sundry cultural liberationisms remain significantly radical once they had disowned the past that contains the referents by which radical critique of the present is made possible. Thus cultural liberationism became an unfocused decadence reacting to what was seen as the decadence of its received world.

Without a cultural tradition of established authority, the old bohemianism—necessarily adversarial and sometimes corrective—was no longer possible. In addition, the explosive growth of the "new class" ensconced the would-be bohemians into the leadership roles of the new cultural establishment. At all points of cultural prestige and influence outsiders had become tenured insiders, but they brought with them no agenda other than doing battle against insiders. The traditional function of an elite was to transmit and advance the achievements of the past. That was not possible for an elite that had earned its spurs by disowning the past. Members of the new elite had no function other than to be the elite, to be *themselves.*

"I wanna be ME!" Rock stars and scholars with foundation grants both said it in their own ways; for both, the imperative was to be liberated, to be "free to be." It is not easy to be avant-



garde when the old guard is in disarray. To sustain the plausibility of the claim that one is defying restraints one must go in search of "last taboos" to defy. Thus the fascination with incest. Thus the resentment of D. H. Lawrence who, in his aim to shock, had it altogether too easy. Thus the professor of English who applauds as a signal of liberation a *Hustler* magazine cartoon which depicts a doctor copulating with fetuses from late abortions. Thus the popularity of *Self* magazine, which might serve as the generic title for most of the items in the magazine racks.

In a dead world, the self is the only point of life in the universe. On my desk is an official form from a major (and, all things considered, a relatively conservative) church body. It

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was sent to me by a seminarian and is to be filled out by candidates for ordination. It asks about the candidate's self-development, about her/his significant interactional relationships, about whether she/he feels she/he is realizing her/his potential, and so forth. It does not ask about sin and grace, about the meaning of redemption or the purpose of life. It does not ask about faith in God. Ministry, it is to be inferred, is a matter of feeling free to be oneself.

We are by now all too familiar with liberationist decadence, the first face of decadence. It not only hollows out the symbols and meanings of received culture but it celebrates the resulting emptiness. It does not challenge particular rules but the idea of rules. It can abide neither precedents nor promises, for nothing can be acknowledged as authoritative or binding. The imperial self requires a vacuum in order to be free to be. This is not the demonically heroic nihilism of a Nietzsche. There is little here of the darkness and devastation and will-to-power. No, this is the adolescent's dream, sleeping by the reassuring nite-lite of the soon-to-be-satisfied self.

Hermetic decadence, the second face, is something else. More precisely, it is the decadence that would build and inhabit a world elsewhere. Such a world must be sealed off so that its symbols, gestures, and jargon are understood only by those who have been initiated into its mysteries. It is a community attuned to the occult and is typically gnostic. Membership is dependent upon consciousness-raising that elevates one above ordinary cognition. It is a community powerfully attractive to those of refined sensibilities who are repulsed by the vulgarity of the unfeeling hordes. Unlike liberationist decadence, it does not assume that the meanings of the ordinary world are dead or dying, but that they are too much alive and threatening: they are so gross, so ugly—in a word, so *awful.* Liberationist decadence is a reaction to a dead world; hermetic decadence is a refuge from a repugnant world.

Hermetic decadence is Oscar Wilde. It is Blanche of *A Streetcar Named Desire,* entranced by a gossamer world of beauty and besieged by a "real" world of beastliness. It is the Symbolist poets of the late 19th century, who did not hesitate to say that they were constructing a new religion for those who are able to accept it. It is Paul Marie Verlaine settling in for the end, surrounded by the aging prostitutes and young boys who he said were "the muses of my decadence."

There is no entry for "decadence" in the standard encyclopedias. The term crops up in connection with the erotic, sometimes in connection with violence and the erotic, most often in connection with the homoerotic. That may be because, as some contend, the books are written by raving homophobes. There may be other explanations. While homosexuality is far from being the only form of hermetic decadence, it is the most obvious form in contemporary culture. For Karl Barth, the great Swiss theologian, homosexuality is "the physical, psychological and social sickness, the phenomenon of perversion, decadence and decay" which emerges when man "refuses to admit the validity of the divine command" which stands behind the created order. He cites Saint Paul's connection of homosexuality with an idolatry that adores the creature instead of the Creator:

> For this reason God gave them up into vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature, and likewise the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves the recompence of their error. (Romans 1)

Barth is not unmoved by the attractions of that which he censures, for he writes, "We know that in its early stages it may have an appearance of particular beauty and spirituality, and even be redolent of sanctity. Often it has not been the worst people who have discovered and to some extent practiced it as a sort of wonderful esoteric of personal life."

In this view, the decadent is defined by reference to the natural. Today, homosexual advocacy, in union with many other cultural forces, challenges the definition of the natural. More than that, the idea of anything being natural, and therefore that anything could be unnatural, is repudiated. Such advocacy belongs more appropriately in the category of liberationist decadence. Hermetic decadence does not challenge the meaning of natural. It readily acknowledges, indeed exults in, the claim that it *is* unnatural. Liberationist homoeroticism today threatens to put an end to hermetic homoeroticism. The liberationists demand that their sisters and brothers come out of the closet. They do not understand that the closet is the world elsewhere.

The third face of decadence is the tragic. *Tragic* may seem too lofty a term; perhaps it is merely dismal decadence. And yet there is an element of the tragic here, for these decadents believed in the world they now see dying. They were often wholehearted participants in the historical progress which they now see turning back upon us in wrath. They are disillusioned decadents, for in high hope they helped sow the wind of the impending whirlwind. They are not among the liberationist decadents who say there is nothing worth dying for. It is simply that dying for what is worthy, or living for it, will make no difference.

Among their number are the apocalypticists—nuclear, ecological, and other. Paul Fussell says modern memory was shaped by The Great War, the war that taught us that "modern" means "hopeless." The Arthur Schlesinger who in 1947 urged us to assert the democratic idea as "a fighting faith" now routinely warns us against the hubris of thinking there might be anything universally valid in Western culture. Robert

(cont. on page 30)

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Horrors in the Age of Disbelief

Stephen King: *Pet Sematary;* Doubleday; New York.

by Robert F. Geary

If it is true that popular literature, in however unexamined a fashion, embodies many of the presuppositions of an age, then the last decade and a half's spate of supernatural shockers raises some intriguing questions. According to the higher wisdom of the academy, for instance, the creature known as Modern Man has outgrown the supernatural. (Hence, in the 60's some prominent theologians proclaimed the logical conclusion of a century of rationalizing theology: God is dead and the Secular City of liberal good deeds is at hand.) Yet nobody who has spent 10 minutes during the last 10 years looking at a rack of popular paperbacks in this country would reach the same conclusion. In mass fiction and movies, unearthly horrors abound, suggesting at the least that the Age of Secular Man is on hold.

How are we to account for the popularity of works which, according to most of the official definitions of modernity, should scarcely be finding readers at all? Literary critics are not of much help here. Most treat the Gothic novel and its successor, the ghost or horror story, as a covert exploration of the darker, usually sexual, aspects of the psyche, culminating in James's *The Turn of the Screw,* wherein the supernatural reveals itself as the psychological. Since ours is an age obviously awash in psychoanalytical "awareness" and sexual liberation, there would seem to exist no further need for symbolic spooks to treat sexual themes. Thus the tale of supernatural terror, according to Tzvetan Todorov and others, has become obsolete. Such theorizing, however, says more about the power of rationalist paradigms to block out reality than it does about the lure of the enormously popular supernatural chillers.

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The seeming anomaly of the persistent, ever-growing appeal of supernatural terror tales in a secular age rests on the assumption that psychological secularization is a phenomenon that is uniform and unidirectional, leading inexorably into an era of profane consciousness, a totally "disenchanted" world. The reality, however, is more complex. In the modern world, no single system of meaning has replaced the weakened sacred cosmos of the past. Nor does any seem likely to, given the jolts encountered by the dogmas of rationalism, scientism, and Marxism. The modern condition is one of partial or "arrested" secularization in which, as Thomas Luckmann argues in *The Invisible Religion,* public norms of functional rationality fail to satisfy the desires of many people who, in turn, construct their own eclectic, provisional systems of "ultimate" meaning. Hence the bewildering variety of parareligious fads competing in the cultural marketplace. Self-help manuals promising personality transformations, tracts on the marvels of holistic health, books on astrology—these and more testify to the need of secular multitudes to gain some sense of control over their destiny or to link their lives with something more awesome than the mundane flux of events. In this climate the stories of supernatural terror thrive. As the quest for the sacred takes ever more diverse forms, these stories give many readers the vicarious thrill of the darkly numinous without binding them to institutional religion or to any moral or theological framework. In an age of do-it-yourself systems of meaning, the neo-Gothic has no difficulty finding an avid audience.

Indeed, cultural secularization initially helped generate the tale of supernatural fear. By weakening the context of reasoned religious beliefs surrounding the supernatural, 18th-century skepticism made it possible for the supernatural to be used in literature for its own sake as the free-floating numinous terror essential to the horror story. In the early Gothic novels, the supernatural was something of an embarrassment, half in and half out of a providential context, therefore needing to be distanced or simply, as in Mrs. Radcliffe, explained away altogether. However, by the middle of the 19th century, the supernatural had become attractive to writers who, oppressed by the culture's rationalism and materialism, could use ghostly terrors to take a curious revenge on the disbelief which had first helped to release the supernatural from the matrix of developed religious faith. Thus, many of the classic horror tales enact conflicts in which a smugly dominant rationalism is undermined, shocked, and sometimes destroyed by the very forces it has chosen to deny. The typical pattern of such stories involves the intrusion into the ordinary, skeptical world of older, dark forces whose greatest power derives from the self-induced blindness of the modern, "enlightened" victims. Consequently, there is the nearly archetypal situation where the peasants know truths which their sophisticated superiors deny (to their peril).

Pet Sematary, Stephen King's 10th horror novel in as many years, fits the formula neatly. As Louis Creed settles his family into a large old house and prepares for his new position as head physician at the University of Maine's student infirmary, he begins to make unsettling discoveries. His newly purchased home, like so much real estate in neo-Gothic horror fiction, has some drawbacks hitherto unknown to the new buyer. Location is the essence of the trouble: in the woods to the rear of the house lies a peculiar cemetery. In it the children of the area bury their pets and tend the graves with unusual care. ("Sematary" in the title is a child's spelling of "cemetery" on the hand-lettered sign marking the place.) Worse

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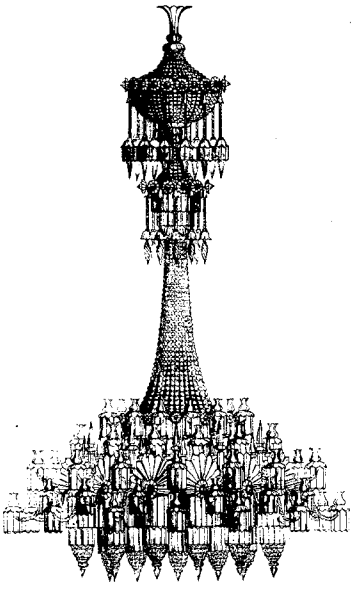
soon develops. In the vast wilderness area behind the cemetery is another burial ground—one that does the reverse of the usual job of providing for rest in peace forever for its inhabitants.

The disquieting events begin to overturn Creed's tidy, rationalistic atheism. At first he simply dismisses the preternatural occurrences as psychological quirks, insisting that "there were no ghosts, at least not in his experience. He had pronounced two dozen people dead in his career and had never once felt the passage of a soul." But with every intrusion of the terrifyingly unnatural, more desperate and unconvincing (even to himself) become Creed's efforts to provide rational, normal explanations such as that he had been dreaming or sleepwalking or made a misdiagnosis of an apparent death. Eventually Creed cannot convince himself of his former certainties—not in the face of daily contact with something whose loathsome unnaturalness compels him to admit that there are flaws in his inherited, profane view of the world. The essence of this view, enforced by a disbelieving college chum and a Psychology I professor, is that "death was just blotto. The end." At the novel's close, watching Louis Creed return one final time to the sinister ground beyond the pet cemetery, a friend intuits what the doctor has learned in horror: there exist realities *"they never told you about in the Atheists Society back in Lake Forest."*

Louis Creed takes his place in a succession of believers in enlightened reason who find out that the old powers—dismissed as "superstitious rot" by modern science, psychology, even theology—do indeed exist and can return to terrorize a world whose credulous rationalism leaves it at their mercy. In this there is little difference between him and the general in Sheridan LeFanu's vampire classic "Carmilla," the cleric in R. L. Stevenson's "Thrawn Janet," or the young Fr. Karras in *The Exorcist.* Creed has thrown off the old taboos and fears of religion, the only vestige of which in his house is the smart-mouthed little daughter's habit of dressing up on Sundays. Accordingly, he possesses few powers against the malevolently supernatural, the only "Church" in the story being a zombie-like cat with that name. In a sense, then, these formulaic tales recapitulate their origins wherein the acids of secular rationalism eroded the inherited religious context, releasing the supernatural as pure numinous dread, the very antithesis of the Enlightenment's promise of a universal reign of reason.



King's handling of the received formula offers clues alike to his popularity and limitations. At about 400 pages, *Pet Sematary* is a longish book, though rather few major events occur. Its length comes from King's hiding the formulaic structure amid passages that recreate the ordinary talk and activities of family life. This rendering of the dramatic, in turn, gives a sense of verisimilitude which makes the irruption of the demonic more fearsome by its contrast with the reassuring familiarity of the life of the Creeds. King's characters do not really transcend the stereotypical, but they have enough depth not to seem obviously two-dimensional and uninteresting as the figures in the novels of so many writers currently working the horror vein do.

However, one difficulty in creating characters of even limited depth is that they invite us to pay attention to their motives. In *Pet Sematary* doing so disappoints, for Louis Creed becomes a sacrifice to the formula, acting as he does finally because the horror genre requires a terrifying climax which King provides even though it means having the main characters behave in a way that makes little sense in terms either of Creed's rationalistic past or his newly discovered experience of the dark supernatural. The author tries to bluff out the contradictions: in one of the novel's frequent passages of literary self-consciousness, Creed is made to think to himself that in horror movies "the audience knows the hero or heroine is stupid to go up those stairs, but in real life they always do—they smoke, they don't wear seatbelts. . . ." This will not do, for habit, thoughtlessness, and the like cannot account for Creed's attraction to what he has every reason—natural and otherwise—to avoid.

Part of the problem here goes beyond the author's catering to public expectations. King does not believe in the formula he uses with such considerable skill: his imagination seems not genuinely haunted by any sense of forces darker than those in the pages of the Psychology I text the novel mocks or those in the pages of the prestige newspapers which, one senses, he would never mock. His own explanations of the rage for horror fiction and movies bespeak a mind thoroughly comfortable with journalistic and academic banalities. In *Danse Macabre,* his theoretical opus on horror, King maintains that the upheavals of our times generate the taste for fictional terrors of every sort. Thus the "subtext" (one notes the latest in academic jargon) of the movie *The Amityville Horror* is "economic unease" over such matters as inflated real estate prices, while the true appeal of *The Exorcist* is supposed to be parents' fear

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of the radical youth of the late 60's and early 70's. The pop sociology here is on a level with the historical shallowness which fails to grasp that Americans endured shocks and threats aplenty before Sputnik distressed the 10-year-old Stephen King in 1957; there were, after all, two world wars, and the Great Depression among the events likely to foster uncertainty and fear. Indeed, King's view of the world, at least on a surface level, seems close to that of the rationalistic victims of supernatural terrors in the fictional pattern he has so lucratively followed. In a recent interview, for example, he asserts that "people want horrors they know couldn't really happen" so they can "forget their troubles." Thus King follows the tested recipe, but winks at us over his shoulder to show us that he for one is not taking it all seriously. Hence the allusions to a gamut of scary works—from *The Wizard of Oz* to George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead*—by which the author demonstrates that *he* knows it's only a story. (Hence, too, King's harsh words for Blatty, who appears to have been serious about the subject matter of *The Exorcist.*) To lend an additional air of respectability to the work, King inserts what are to pass for serious reflections on the death-is-a-natural-part-of-life dogma (though the story implicitly makes hash of this glib contemporary insight).

It is, then, no great surprise that the actions of the main character do not make sense; that the evil supernatural force lacks any resonance (most people not knowing a Wendigo from a make of camper); and that *Pet Sematary* does not linger fearfully in the reader's imagination. A facile writer, able to embody in easy narrative the surfaces and clichés of contemporary life, King refuses to give himself to the core of the subgenre in which he works. He can be prolific but is unlikely to attain the intensity of myth reached by popular classics such as *Frankenstein* and *Dracula.* Paradoxically, he may be the master of contemporary horror because his works do not demand serious engagement, even on a popular level. In a secularized cultural market retaining, even fostering, an appetite for the vaguely numinous, King serves up a counterpart of high-grade fast food—neither offensive nor memorable. A horror story should haunt us; *Pet Sematary's* real failing is that it does not. □

Scholarly Smut

Peter Gay: *Education of the Senses, Volume I of The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud;* Oxford University Press; New York.

by Thomas Molnar

When Brantôme in the 16th century wrote a rather spicy *Life of Great Ladies,* or Samuel Pepys, in the 17th century, wrote his diary, neither intended these works as a history of culture, which is a modern erudite/academic genre. Nor was this the aim of Mark Twain, Flaubert, and many others who, outside their public art, devoted little volumes for the tastes of delighted amateurs, and later, for the under-the-counter trade. The mores, of course, have changed. Yale's Peter Gay, hitherto a respectable historian of ideas and culture—of the Enlightenment, of the Weimar Republic—has brought out the first volume of *The Bourgeois Experience: Victoria to Freud,* a hefty tome that reads like a combination of sexologists Krafft-Ebing and John Masters, and better-class girlie magazines. The author's intention must have been to acquaint us, in mostly tiresome chapters, with the underside of bourgeois existence. The most telling thing about the book is that it, in our dreary fin de siècle, passes as "cultural history." Perhaps unwittingly, Gay illustrates not so much the Victorian morals—illustrates it, that is, from below—but our decayed civilization, one that permits a reputable professor and a reputable publisher to collaborate in bringing forth so much obscenity.

It is presented as "history": meticulous documentation; a huge, closely printed bibliographical essay (45 pages); solid erudition; a wide sampling of German, American, French, English societies during the bourgeois century. What bores from the outset is the early realization that on the subsequent hundreds of pages there will be talk of nothing but sex. Granted, sex is natural to humans. Moreover, we have been told and told and told that there is nothing to be ashamed of, that we should get rid of our Manichaeism, that sex is good for preschoolers and pensioners alike, and that by year 2000 mankind shall enter paradise under the guidance of ERA and NAMBLA. (Sade had predicted that much for 1789; we are late.) Nevertheless, when faced with the endless annals of sex between obscure New England ladies, their husbands, lovers and other women's husbands and lovers, and when the same unoriginal plot is recounted between Ruskin and Effie, Lester Ward and Mrs., the Goncourt brothers and their mistresses, then again back to the same between American housewives, husbands, and lovers—one is hardly comforted by the reassurance that the documents tell the truth that hides under the stiff upperlipped simulacra of a hypocritical century. Quite literally, Who cares?

Gay, of course, wants us to care. After all, many years' research has been invested in this and the promised sister volume or volumes. What is Gay's enterprise? He says that it is to explore the libidinal drive of the bourgeois, its loving, erotic, and perverse expressions. Sade, at least, wrote no preface, and did not introduce the social class-system as

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an explanatory factor. But there is more to discourage Gay's reader: he is told, and told again throughout the volume, that the author's great, unique mentor is Sigmund Freud. Now, whatever we may think of the Viennese guru, his transcendent prestige has with the years eroded. Not only was he posthumously psychoanalyzed and found inaccurate, fraudulent in the description of his most celebrated case-histories (hating his father, etc.) his regularly evoked name has become a bad-smelling label, not unlike that of brother Marx. If every social phenomenon is explained by Marxism, and every other by Freudism (until Marcuse achieved a "synthesis"), then, of course, nothing is explained. But Gay is tenacious: "the theories of Freud have been indispensable to me;" "My principal intellectual obligation is obviously to Sigmund Freud." The announcement reeks of upside-down Victorianism.

Early in the body of the book, Gay quotes Freud's letter to Fliess in which he says he had seen his mother naked during a train trip when he was two-and-a-half-years-old . This is the central theme; Gay discovers similar threads in the sex lives of all bourgeois men, from William Gladstone to David Todd. The book itself is an exasperating string of "true confessions." The author quotes letters, diaries, conversations, medical documents, travelogues, poems, museum catalogues—the whole apparatus of a scholar—only monotonously to insist on bourgeois guilt feeling, the heartrending ignorance of young ladies trapped by their husbands' similar ignorance and consequent impotence or brutality. This is the world seen from the level of a chamber pot. It is then not surprising that this *culture*-historical study is studded with declarations like: "Mabel Todd's erotic experience throws light on nineteenth-century bourgeois culture." Such a sentence would be laughable if found in a student's term paper, but it is sad when similar ones feed 500 professorial pages. Gay makes the reader privy to so many examples of sexual relationships that the reader becomes a voyeur.

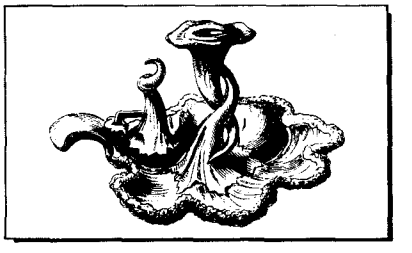
However, such details result in high sales figures, which proves the author's business acumen. Today we are immersed in a pornographic flood. There is no film without the obligatory bed scene, no play without obscene words, no school without sex education, no feminist movement without the inalienable right to copulate, no modern lifestyle without wife-swapping. From advertisements to TV panels, sex crowds the culture-market. Thus, a "scholarly" examination of the "cultural history" of sex has a ready market. The public is panting to read such a book, a treasure trove of quotations at cocktail parties. At a certain level, if not of culture, then of academic degree, one may wish to mix one's conversation with more than four-letter words, called for the purpose "erotica." Peter Gay supplies them in bulk. In other matters, too, he takes the fashionable side, as when he informs males that opposition to women's rights comes from men's fear of castration by females. Which Congressman would now dare vote down ERA? He also supplies arguments to advocates of sex education for children—didn't baby Sigmund enjoy seeing his naked mother? For good measure, he describes the devastating effects of ignorance on the wedding night. He allows us to draw our own conclusion about tabooed homosexuality, which was also Freud's conclusion: everything that ends in ejaculation is healthy.

My chief objection to the book (does it stem from my castration complex?) is that it is *boring*. A serious writer should choose his subject in such a way that it becomes at once obvious to the reader that he means to give a view of the eternally human. Now, you might ask, are love and its erotic aspects not eminently human? Let me then further qualify that humanness ought to be seen above the level of bed and bidet, above Mabel Todd's weekly bath in preparation for lovemaking, above the orgasmic grunts of Edmond Goncourt's mistress. The mere fact that things happen and are universal, does not turn them into items of cultural history. A world history of defecation, to pick an appropriate example, may not be an adequate topic through which to learn about man. Nor

Notables

Shakespeare Sighed

Art in England is moribund; it has fallen in a pattern directly correlating to the rise of the many musical noisemakers that it has spawned during the past 20 years; there will never (again) be an England. Such observations are rife today, yet people like playwright Tom Stoppard and author A. N. Wilson lead us to believe that all of the bays are not rotting on the hillsides of England. Stoppard's *The Real Thing* on Broadway proves that one need not "sell out" to be successful; Wilson's *Wise Virgin* (Viking Press; New York) indicates that Evelyn Waugh is not entirely forgotten. Unlike the Stoppard play, *Wise Virgin,* a pre-postmodern novel of morals and manners, will un-



doubtedly not become a "hit." The reason is more basic than that which claims that there is no market for serious novels, even if they are as slim as Wilson's is. People can identify with *The Real Thing,* for to them, the ticket-buying masses, it signifies Coke. *Wise Virgin,* on the other hand, is either nonsense or an oxymoron as far as the reigning code of discourse is concerned.

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is the topic of *Education of the Senses.*

Education of the senses. An admirably chosen title, alas debased and trivialized on every page of this book. The senses are educated by the objects that surround us, at home, on the streets, in travels; by the sights of monuments and landscapes, the color of gardens, the smells of the marketplace; by contact with people, the touch of animals, the noise of cities, the secrets of the night. Sex itself does not educate the senses, nor does eating refine the palate. Our primary instincts bring us pleasure; it is not their function to educate us. Education is the product of higher satisfactions in which pleasure, reflection, memory, beliefs, curiosity, time, place, and myriad other vibrations mix. For Peter Gay, education seems to mean the acceptance of instinctual behavior as a social norm—value-free of course. He celebrates sexual pleasure.

The author whom reviewers will celebrate for his nonconformism and path-breaking boldness, does not attempt to break out of today's clichés. His work merely reinforces society's dominant hedonist streak and launches a new branch of scholarship, *sexual history,* with no other apparent purpose than to cause a certain kind of enjoyment and justify contemporary practices by showing how they overcame past and prudish limits. There is another "first": blatant sex via the university press. Since the book will achieve success and fame, perhaps another university press will go farther: include an invitation to Plato's Retreat, The New York Copulation Club, or a membership card to NAMBLA. □

Dreams of Avarice

Ivan Fallon and James Srodes: *Dream Maker: The Rise and Fall of John Z. DeLorean;* G. P. Putnam's Sons; New York.

Elizabeth Drew: *Politics and Money: The New Road to Corruption;* Macmillan; New York.

by Thomas L. Ashton

Ethics in America, a recent Gallup survey conducted for the *Wall Street Journal,* finds that business-class marijuana smokers are twice as likely as nonusers to fake illness to avoid work, to overstate their credentials, and to misuse company means for private ends. Gallup makes the necessary disclaimer that his figures are no proof of a casual relationship, "but rather that drug experimentation is a good indicator of permissiveness or perhaps a new morality." That this is no explanation at all is clear in John Z. DeLorean's history of dope and bad business—which tells a lot more than a Gallup survey. Certainly DeLorean knew that a society which measures morality by survey has no morality at all, and that *new* morality means *relative* morality that can be used to justify anything. DeLorean mixed cocaine and a car to come up with a cultural paradox: an ethical dream car. But you can't drive a paradox, as many Americans discovered. DeLorean's unethical dream shows us that the issue today is not the difference between right and wrong, but whether, in fact, there *is* a difference between them.

"Everybody wants the dollar, and they don't care how they get it!" declares a 68-year-old grandmother in *Ethics in America.* Her response cuts through the survey's statistics, profiles, and limp detachment. It sees the meaning of executives who believe the public to be more immoral—a public which believes the opposite—and the shared feeling of executives and the general public that ethical standards have declined. Grandmother knows that you can't want if you don't care, that cause is related to effect, that right and wrong are not one in the same—essentially that the ends never justify the means. Burke warns modern liberals when he tells us never to confuse good and the means of good, which is just what intellectuals do when they put the moral cart before the horse. It takes a grandmother's wisdom to know this. Morality doesn't come in dream car prototypes or this year's models, and that is the ultimate point of the DeLorean unethical dream.

Srodes and Fallon were captivated by the life-is-stranger-than-fiction aspects of the DeLorean tale. For them it is a tragic drama, which their publisher calls Greek, but German is what they had in mind. *Dream Maker* clearly hankers after *Faust,* but it dishes up soap opera, which is the difference between an impossible dream and an unethical one. DeLorean is at best a tawdry Faustus, and we are still forced to ask: Who is the genuine Mephistopheles? Which is the same thing as asking: Why did he do it? Even in their conclusion, Srodes and Fallon still don't know. "The missing ingredient," they write, "is John DeLorean's character. We will never know why he became the way he is." But *Dream Maker* does have an answer, thanks to the inconclusiveness if not the ingenuity of its authors. The DeLorean drama is a lesson on the modern way of evil.

In the first act of *Dream Maker,* we watch DeLorean—wearing Horatio Alger garb—make it to the general managership of General Motors' Pontiac Division by the age of 40. This is accomplished with hard work on the Tempest and GTO models, engineering talent, and his close association with GM prince William "Bunkie" Knudsen. But thanks to Srodes and Fallon we also see another DeLorean on the stage. This shadowy figure is involved in doubtful financial dealings about minitheaters, real estate, and auto dealerships. This is the DeLorean who steals the stage in Act Two, which is ushered in with a midlife crisis. He gets a new chin, a new wife, and

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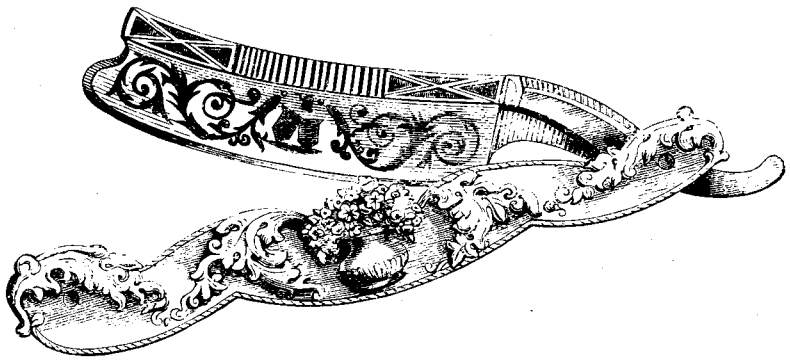
the chance to spend a lot of time in Hollywood now that he is running Chevrolet. He will attend celebrity-studded parties, where he got a prevue of his third wife and struck what was later to be his cocaine connection. Still later GM will discover, according to Srodes and Fallon, a host of missing "gift" cars from its California inventory. Much later Johnny Carson will sink some $500,000 into DeLorean Motor Car, whose product he was to represent as advertising symbol and national spokesman.

Act Two has its difficulties for DeLorean, the engineer, in the executive suite. Knudsen leaves for the presidency of Ford, and the 14th floor at GM turns hostile. But DeLorean, the shady financier, is learning how to turn pose into profit, as well as the techniques of cash diversion, and how to buy, sell, and buy back auto patents and the rights to production processes. He also gets a lesson in how to be a socially responsible businessman from liberal activist and journalist William F. Haddad, who is glad to include a chapter by DeLorean, whipped up in the GM publicity works, in a book on the Black economic struggle. Eventually, Haddad will become public relations director for DeLorean Motor Car. Finally, he will call DeLorean a "racist." Indeed, the total corruption of Haddad is one of the subplots of *Dream Maker,* and a dirty, low account of greed, fear, and trembling. DeLorean's media manipulation in the form of leaks of sensitive GM material notwithstanding, he is forced out of Detroit in May 1973, an unwanted prophet, but not yet dishonored. In the same month, he begins his third marriage, to ex-starlet and model Christina, just as the curtain comes down. The intermission is not long.

Only a very small part of the third act has to do with the development of the dream car. DeLorean the engineer is hardly seen, and there are strong indications that the car was never more than a fund-raising device for the man with the gull-wing eyebrows and designer jeans. Ten thousand dollars a month plus expenses went to a public relations firm to promote ***him***—not his car. All the public saw in the August 1975 issue of *Automotive News* was a glossy of something called the DSV—for DeLorean safety vehicle—and a hyped manifesto touting the ethical car which would later



be designed, in DeLorean's words, "specially for horny bachelors." But Srodes and Fallon go behind the image and detail how DeLorean, the media magician and financier, multiplied himself into at least three domestic corporate entities, and then show us how these turn into five, including the Geneva-based and Panamanian-registered GPD services, and something called TK International, which bears the initials of DeLorean's attorney and personal financial advisor. Concurrently, we watch how a puffed $350,000 becomes $3.5 million, then $30 million, then $300 million. The man and the money multiply jointly, and not without interconnection. When Srodes and Fallon do their final accounting, $30 million dollars have been siphoned off to nowhere.

Because his ambitions were truly global, DeLorean needed more than a $20 million Oppenheimer and Company-sponsored partnership to mishandle; he needed a national treasury. He found one in the form of the Northern Ireland Development Authority (NIDA). This was unfortunate for Belfast—now it is known as the town that launched both the *Titanic* and the DMC-12, each supposedly unsinkable. British taxpayers, stuck with a bill in excess of $200 million dollars, will never forget either disaster. DeLorean was no longer interested in the actual creation of his dream car. He gave that job up to Collin Chapman of Britain's Lotus Group. The English designed his car; the Irish built his factory; and the two groups never cooperated, which helps explain why the car was astonishingly unsuccessful. The money which NIDA gave DeLorean to build the car went to DeLorean Motor Car; DMC then paid Lotus; Lotus, according to Srodes and Fallon, then paid DeLorean's GPD. It isn't clear who got exactly what—but it appears that the car was paid for three times over. There was no division of spoils—only multiplication—DMC took its money and then asked NIDA for more in order to pay Lotus and so on down the chain. The DMC-12 failed because its costs were thrice inflated, and DeLorean's dream—not his car—was worth $30 million more. "I can't wait the five or six years it will take for the company to perform," DeLorean told his financial officer William Stryker, "I want to live now."

Once DeLorean had taken all he could get from NIDA, he went after Parliament directly. The British were forced to up their ante by means of public relations scenarios delivered by Haddad—the death of Bobby Sands, the IRA at the factory gates, and always the need to create more and more jobs. DMC deliberately hired more hands than it needed in order to increase pressure on the Parliamentary purse. And preferring its bleeding heart more than its bled purse,

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the Labor government wrote: "There are people there in their thirties and forties who have never worked in their lives, people with grown-up children who have never seen their fathers do a day's work. You have to look at those men's eyes to understand what West Belfast is about. There's no sparkle there, no hope." Srodes and Fallon swallow this excuse for the deficits that big welfare government yearns to create, and tell us that "men who had never worked in their lives were enthusiastically seizing the opportunity they thought would never come" at the DMC plant. But later in the same act they write: "There is a long industrial tradition in Northern Ireland, and although many of the new men had never had jobs, some had been mechanics, garage workers, or had worked in the Grundig factory nearby, at the shipyard, or in one of the factories now closed." All too late the London *Financial Times* would warn after the British cut their losses: "There is no security in jobs which depend on permanent government subsidy." Here at the end of Act Three of *Dream Maker* the audience gets its closest look at DeLorean's Mephistopheles; the resemblance to Michael Harrington is striking. Once we know who is the real Mephisto—the self-serving spending of big government—the irony of the final act of *Dream Maker* improves from the ridiculous to the sublime.

Amidst all the questions about who entrapped whom in the cocaine affair, and about secret warnings exchanged between the U.S. and the U.K. in the days before the bust, there emerges something more significant: the identity of what DeLorean put up for the $3 million seed money falsely extended by U.S. agents to buy the drugs that would gross some $60 million on the street. DeLorean's ante was 50 percent of DeLorean Motor Car. In other words, the very same big government which had inflated DeLorean was now going to buy him out one more time in order to bust him. More ironic is the fact that DMC seems to have been nothing more than a paper shell at the time; so that if DeLorean had managed to sell himself once more, he would have realized a 2000 percent increase in capital (ca. $300K to $60M) in under ten years.

Dream Maker is certain proof that we no longer want the things that money buys; we simply want more and more money. Money doesn't just make us rich; instead, being rich makes a new us. A culture which values money as a thing per se, the DeLorean culture, is a culture hung up on images. Money is what makes those images real because it is itself the image of an unlimited freedom of identity that human consciousness turns to with Faustian yearning. Underlying this change in money's meaning is a change in our understanding of the concept of value itself. If the culture of relative morality, constantly advocating us to "do our own thing," cues the DeLoreans of this world, the concept of relative value that they are driven to is what destroys them. Mankind can never have enough in a relative universe. This is why wisdom finds in money the root of all evil—not because of money but because of the nature of evil. Money must possess our souls in a culture of relative value; because evil must fill the vacuum created when relative morality destroys ultimate and necessary restraints on human behavior. These restraints define what is human. Inhumanity is the meaning of evil. That is why we ask the Lord to "deliver us from evil"—at least until we begin to think that money is more important than prayer.

Money as more than money, and our desire for more and more of it connect *Dream Maker* and Elizabeth Drew's *Politics and Money*. "What is driving the chase for money is its own momentum," writes Drew, bent on exposing "the great rivers of private money, much of it

In the forthcoming issue of *Chronicles of Culture:*

Renounce Yalta

"One of the most persistent sources of confusion among educated Americans is the failure to realize that the Soviet Union's relations with the outside world are conducted on levels which do not correspond to those of democratic societies. On *Good Morning, America*, for example, David Hartman recently described Stanislav Menshikov, a functionary of the Communist Party's Central Committee, as a foreign policy 'advisor' to the Soviet government. In reality, the Central Committee's apparat 'advises' the Soviet government in precisely the same way that Edgar Bergen acted as adviser to Charlie McCarthy. . . . Despite repeated lessons over more than 60 years, Americans still find it hard to believe that the purpose of all levels of Soviet society is to serve the Communist apparatus and not the other way around."

—from "Selling the Rope . . . and More"
by Henry L. Mason III

ALSO

Opinions & Views—Commendables—Waste of Money
In Focus—Perceptibles—American Proscenium
Journalism—Notables—Liberal Culture
Screen—Music—Art—Confluences

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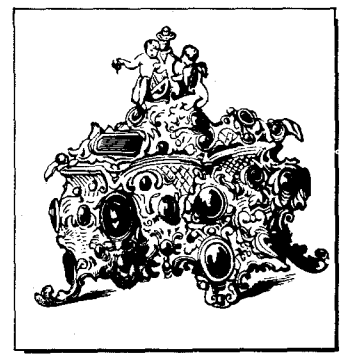
untraceable," that still flow into the electoral process. *Politics and Money* shows us how Congress plays PAC man, and is certainly useful if only for its detailed reporting of how Political Action Committees work now that the election financing reforms of 1974 have come and largely gone. Drew sees representative government at stake, and there is no disputing her cause. But her method raises doubts which begin with the subtitle: The New Road to Corruption. *Dream Maker* should have taught us that there can be only one such road, just as there is only one oldest profession. Part of the objection here stems from the book's source, a series of essays originally written for the *New Yorker*. That most sophisticate of intellectual and liberal journals prefers a pose of extreme innocence in its writers. This not only guarantees their liberal purity, but allows a continuously shocked response to ordinary, daily truths. Without the shock we might be less than certain about the worldly solutions that the *New Yorker* expects us to be thankful for. While Drew's attack on the PAC's is virtuous, not virtuoso. *Politics and Money* is clearly a Democratic-leaning book, and Drew's insistence on business/labor polarity can overlook their taking the same side, as well as the diversity of interest which often divides supposedly homogeneous business interests. Faction, which Madison understood as a democratic guarantee, we are never without.

The book succeeds best when it tells us what the new breed of PAC brokers actually do. The case histories of Thomas Boggs, Robert Strauss, and Anne Wexler at work harvesting, reaping, and sowing are finely tuned to expose self-serving momentum. But Drew needs to tell us a great deal more about Congressmen with their own PAC's, for it is now commonplace that Congressmen not only take but also give to other Congressmen. For example, Representative Henry Waxman, the Hollywood Democrat and liberal fund raiser, gave $24,000 in contributions to members of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce; they later elected him to a vital subcommittee chairmanship. *Politics and Money* is worth reading precisely because it explains that money has made our politics more ideological. The danger is that we will choose too much on the basis of a candidate's labels, less on his ability to govern. The liberal solution to this problem is explained by Drew. She wants us to redefine what we mean by "freedom of speech" in order to reduce the importance of election finance by means of insured *and* controlled broadcast access. Drew wants to "uncouple the idea of the 'marketplace of ideas' from the idea of the 'free market,' " but this is to pay far too high a price in Constitutional terms, nor will doing so help us "get back to how the political system was supposed to work." In the beginning was the word, not the buck, no matter how eternal it may seem. □

Notables

Freudulence



Since God is an awesome, virtually inexplicable, and noncomprehensible existence when it comes to a consideration of totality, men who think that everything that *is* should be capable of being expressed in human terms have a tendency to create idols from the stuff of lesser beings. Two men, both of whom were born in the 19th century and who thus have a shimmering patina upon them from time, have achieved mythical status: Marx and Freud. Their feet of clay have been replaced by dreams. For example, societies of, as they're called in the ponderous critiques, "actually existing socialism" show that Karl's calculations were wrong. But the supporters hasten to say that they're not incorrect *in themselves*, but merely misinterpreted and so misapplied, which amounts to patter reminiscent of the fast talk of Borscht-belt comedians. While Marxism is obviously, objectively a failure, its fawning adherents tenaciously cling to their delusions.

In *The Assault on Truth: Freud's Suppression of the Seduction Theory* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; New York), Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, former Projects Director of the Sigmund Freud Archives (he was fired) doesn't show that Freud was *wrong*. That, we think, would be impossible to do, given the fact that *wrong* implies a verifiably correct alternative. Its historical pretensions to being a science notwithstanding, psychoanalysis is more akin to a philosophy or an art than to something wherein there can be *proofs*. Dr. Masson simply shows that Freud was a man. As a social being, he was required to tailor his public and private statements with prudence, otherwise, he would have become an outcast. To be sure, Freud rocked the boat with his syntheses, but he had no desire to be keelhauled. Freud once maintained that the cause of some hysteria in adults was their having been sexually abused as children. It was a shockingly unpopular theory. Freud, ignoring facts, moved away from this position and to one that maintained that many of the patients fantasized these early sexual abominations perpetrated on them by adults. His reasons for doing so were less "scientific" and more personal. But the fantasy concept became dogma. Masson has marshalled evidence that calls attention to Freud's "failure of courage" and the subsequent dubious activities of many of those who were responsible for creating Freudism. He is, then, a heretic in the eyes of the believers. But he might just be a very honest man. □

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The Essence of Evil

Susan Jacoby: *Wild Justice: The Evolution of Revenge;* Harper & Row; New York.

Joe McGinniss: *Fatal Vision;* G. P. Putnam's Sons; New York.

by Daniel J. O'Neil

These two very different books are linked by a common theme—coping with evil. Jacoby presents a philosophical-historical view of revenge, and a case for its utilization under certain guarded conditions. McGinniss tells the story of Captain Jeffrey MacDonald, the Green Beret doctor who was convicted of murdering his wife and two children. It is a grisly tale presented with all the skills of a first-rate investigative reporter. Jacoby approaches her topic in the abstract while McGinniss approaches his in the concrete. Both move onto the stage where man confronts evil.

Contemporary America, based on Enlightenment, Liberal-Democratic precepts, has a problem in coping with evil. History has been basically kind to the American citizenry. We have enjoyed abundant resources, impressive opportunity, and spectacular mobility. During 200 years we suffered only one civil war, our foreign wars have been against weaker foes and, until quite recently, successful. During the two 20th-century World Wars, while reaping the fruits of victory, we experienced nothing akin to the European casualty rates. Our domestic politics has been marked by continuity and legitimacy. The American constitution is the oldest written one in continuous usage and the totalitarian ideologies that have undermined so many political systems have failed to thrive. Our major domestic problem of race and poverty—when placed in a historical and comparative perspective—seems amenable to solution. Especially indicative of the American success story is the barrage of immigrants seeking legal, quasi-legal, or illegal entry. And America's most strident domestic critics seldom opt to leave. It might be argued that such success can make a people oblivious to evil, that it deprives them of a sense of the tragedy of human existence. Have we paradoxically been deprived of spiritual insights allowed less fortunate peoples who have experienced suffering? Were the 19th-century Slavophiles perhaps correct in linking spiritual insight to suffering? The perceptive Solzhenitsyn notes how suffering enabled him to recognize evil, to reject the transient, and to embrace genuine traditional values.

To cope with evil, one must first recognize it. This involves having a norm of virtue/goodness against which to measure suspected evil. Our less secular forebears possessed such a norm and hence were in a position to identify and abjure evil; or if and when they succumbed, they recognized their sin. Our secular, relativistic,

pluralistic society apparently lacks such a norm. What the ancients labeled as *evil,* we often label as *maladjustment, sickness,* or perhaps *challenge.* In contemporary American society virtually anything goes if it's done in the proper style and justified with the proper code terms: doing one's thing, alternate life-style, questioning authority. What was condemned yesterday may indeed become chic today—abortion, unisexualism, drugs. Or what is legally denied the masses today, might be openly enjoyed by the adversary cultural elite and the Georgetown cocktail circuit. Recognition of evil is far from a simple task.

We live in a society that wants evil to appear unambiguous. It craves an Armageddon with the saints on one side and the demons on the other. It wants our allies to be paradigms of virtue, human rights, and progressive social commitment, and our adversaries to oppose these attributes. Our allies must be without sin and our adversaries without virtue. Our classical and Christian forebears knew better. They recognized that neither men nor institutions were sinless and that the most sinful often possessed a strain of virtue. Hence, maneuvering in this world of mixed virtue and vice is not without difficulty and risk.

Even when recognized, evil cannot readily be *explained;* the relationship between evil and its cause presents problems and opportunities. If one rejects the most logical and natural causal relationship, virtually any connection can be construed. To take a pedestrian example: a boy aims a ball and wantonly breaks a window. Those who wish to excuse the boy can blame, among others, the boy's parents who allowed him out unsupervised, the homeowner who failed to guard his house, the politicians who did not provide an accessible playground, the ball manufacturer, or indeed the entire society for the environment it created.

The ambiguity associated with causation allows an "out" for the professional activists. It is difficult to pin them down and then to hold them responsible for the ramifications of their doctrines. "Liberated" Vietnam offers but one case of causation conjuring. Few Vietnam-era doves accept responsibility for the boat people. One would assume that people who endured French, Japanese, and American hegemony without flight must have experienced a vision of hell to flee their ancestral home. But those who re-

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Intellectual and moral elegance are not out of fashion...

During these times, *Chronicles of Culture* remains based on the proposition that ideas, attitudes, morals and manners still matter—even in a world that takes itself too seriously at one moment and reduces everything to trivialities the next.

At this juncture of history, *Chronicles of Culture* still insists that civilizations are built upon a specific vision of order and virtue. And that moral and social norms have never ceased to be their firmest moorings.

Even today—in spite of all we witness in print and on the screens—*Chronicles of Culture* believes that literature, art, various other modes of cultural expression, and free intellectual inquiry are, as they always have been, the best guardians of humane values. And that they must be defended, with substance and intensity, from the reigning low standards of critical evaluation. *Chronicles of Culture* is not comfortable reading for those who deem reason and rectitude obsolete.

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fuse to face the reality blame the victims (afraid of an austere life-style), China (encouraging ethnic conflict), or the United States (the cause of all Southeast Asian tragedies).

When Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries secure power, eliminate the nonorthodox members of the revolutionary coalition, and turn their societies into gulags, inevitably foreign observers emerge who, after reluctantly admitting the reality, attribute it to the opponents of the Marxist-Leninists. The brutalities of the Russian, Chinese, Cuban, and Vietnamese Communist regimes are blamed on their anticommunist adversaries, which provoked the regimes into taking such actions.

One of the most pathetic cases of domestic causation-conjuring related to the Kennedy assassination. Virtually everyone had a vested interest in avoiding hysteria and, indeed, Johnson handled the succession with grace and prudence. Still, the facts were that the President had been murdered by a military deserter who had absconded to the Soviet Union, had married a Russian, and later involved himself in pro-Cuban lobbying. The facts notwithstanding, some blamed the conservative city where the crime occurred and the conservative voters who sought greater domestic vigilance. Conservatives had somehow created the environment that provoked the gunman.

When evil is recognized and exposed and the causation problem surmounted, a problems of response remains. There exists a spectrum of opportunities and temptations. One can ignore the evil and hope optimistically that it will eventually disappear. One can conveniently place it outside of one's arena of concern contending that it is someone else's responsibility. Thus, generations of Americans recognized the evil involved in racial segregation but assigned responsibility to the "proper" agency and the "proper" time. Was it any surprise that the courts and bureaucracy eventually filled the vacuum?

Many Western Europeans who perceived nazism as evil incarnate hoped that it would moderate with time or that Hitler would turn east to satisfy his territorial lust. Similarly, many contemporaries await—despite the overwhelming evidence—a communism with a human face and hence acquiesce in communist expansionism. Others fear that too aggressive a response could lead to a nuclear holocaust. A prominent media lawyer has publicly stated his commitment never to acknowledge human-rights violations in the socialist states. This attitude maintains that one can be cognizant of evil but opt to tolerate and soft-pedal it because of the perceived ramifications associated with its exposure. One can learn to coexist with it not only out of lethargy, but also because of fear of greater evil stemming from its exposure. Such nonaction is not to be totally despised. Indeed, the Burkean precept—better the known than the unknown evil—is not totally lacking in merit. Much depends upon the available alternatives, perceived ramifications, and existing resources. Unfortunately, it is not within the power of any generation to obliterate evil.

Another approach to evil involves accepting the reality but urging that it be analyzed objectively, i.e., explained. The evil must be placed in a historical and comparative perspective. It is to be made intelligible and thus to some degree forgivable. Thus nazism—probably the most unambiguous 20th-century evil—is linked to World War I, the draconian peace, the depression and inflation, the collapse of a state and society. The result is that, evil as nazism was, the people who voted for it emerge less guilty. This same "examining the roots" process is utilized for the more contemporary revolutionary regimes. It involves emphasis on the conditions before the revolution: colonialism, poverty, socialization in inferiority and cultural contempt. The resulting revolutionary and postrevolutionary barbarities thus appear as reaction to provocation.

In addition to movements, individuals guilty of committing horrendous crimes must be explained. Hence the minute concern with every phase of their activity: toilet training, sexual preference, dietary habits, kinship ties, frustrations, etc. The villain's movements are pinpointed with excruciating meticulousness; his biography is researched with the diligence reserved for the truly significant. We probably now know as much about Charles Manson and Captain MacDonald as about many American Presidents.

In contrast to those who ignore evil and those who focus primarily on explanation are those who romanticize. Evil possesses an attraction and fascination for such people since it involves a contempt for the taboos binding lesser men, a willingness to gamble, and a sense of grandeur. Faust, the Marquis de Sade, and Lucifer himself have never lacked disciples and imitators. The great historical tyrants have their apologists and revisionists. No doubt someday Hitler will have his admirers who will cite his contempt for bourgeois morality, his skill, his daring, and the scale of his ambition. Lenin, Mao, and Ho Chi Minh have already been enshrined in certain pantheons.

There is a venerable American tradition of romanticizing evil notables. Many Puritan colonials espoused the doctrine of the Fortunate Fall. Hollywood popularized the legends of the Western gunslingers, the Eastern gangsters, and the great robber barons; all of these flawed heroes "questioned authority" and seized what they wanted without regard for conventional morality or procedural niceties. While their end was usually tragic, their romanticized careers were not without redeeming virtues.

The romanticization of evil often assumes the form of the cult of violence. The cult usually espouses the belief that society is so corrupt that only violence will redeem. Violence will purify and enable the evolution of the "new man": "You must break the eggs to make the omelet"; "The New Order, like childbirth, must come with blood and pain"; "Every time I hear the word *culture,* I reach for

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my revolver." The Byronic leader embraces violence to destroy the corrupt and to create a purified order. Sorel, the fascists, and the communists have espoused some rendition of this myth.

Another approach involves recognition of evil together with a conscious effort to ally with it. This can be justified as a Machiavellian strategy to defeat an even greater evil, e.g., "Better Stalin than Hitler." Or one forges an alliance with evil supposedly in order to control or moderate it and to seek some higher good. One senses its ascendancy and hopes to limit its impact. Thus many German democrats supported Hitler's Enabling Legislation and numerous European progressives linked with the communists in popular front movements. Today, Marxist-Leninists can always find democrats, social democrats, and nationalists to join national liberation fronts, despite the bleak fate suffered by previous Marxist-Leninist collaborators. Despite the best of intentions, alliance with evil involves the risk of corruption or worse.

Finally one can expose, confront, and resist evil. This perhaps is the most difficult course. One risks being labelled a fanatic, a bore, or a Manichean who categorizes everything into simplistic colors of black and white. This course usually entails consequences: the exercise is time-consuming, demanding, and will be misunderstood. Often one must break with the conventional wisdom and the spirit of the age. Victory is by no means assured. Many who opted for this response to evil have been canonized as saints, but only long after death. □

Consequences of Misused Terminology

Dennis Prager and Joseph Telushkin: *Why the Jews?: The Reason for Antisemitism;* Simon & Schuster; New York.

by Will Morrisey

The authors identify "the first recorded reference to Jews in non-Jewish sources" as a report an Egyptian king caused to be written 1200 years before Christ. "Israel is no more," it boasts. Israel has proved somewhat more resilient than this early critic estimated. The futility of Jew-hatred, which obviously has a long history, results primarily from the strengths of Jews. Those strengths cannot originate in unrefined nature, for no one imagines Jews to be physically stronger than others, and few today posit an innately superior Jewish intellect. They must come from Judaism itself.

Traditionally, Jews have regarded this source of their strengths as the real object of Jew-hatred. But, as the authors observe, many contemporary explanations of anti-Semitism explain the haters without serious reference to the hated. Scapegoating, economic envy, prejudice, and psychosis may tell us something true about anti-Semites, or they may not. What the explanations presented do not tell us is, why *the Jews?* They lead us to Sartre's conclusion, duly cited, that Jews were invented by anti-Semites.

The authors defend the traditional understanding that Jew-hatred is about Jews, not merely about hatred and haters. Judaism provokes anti-Semitism, a variant of evil, in at least three ways: by challenging the validity of the non-Jews' god(s), laws, and national allegiance; by exhorting Jews to act to change the world, not only contemplate it; and by teaching the chosenness, or divine election, of Jews. The authors also make a fourth, much more dubious suggestion. "As a result of the Jews' commitment to Judaism, they have led lives of a higher quality than their non-Jewish neighbors"; better educated, more temperate, more charitable, with stronger families, Jews provoke resentment. The evidence presented that Jews do enjoy such advantages may convince, but without evidence that non-Jews somehow recognize these advantages the argument fails. *Mein Kampf* contains no hint that Hitler resented Jewish virtues, or even recognized them as such. The dilute anti-Semitism we all encounter asserts Jewish peculiarity and inferiority, except in anything involving money. Fortunately, this quality-of-life argument disappears after it is made.

The book's second half contains a survey of Western religions and ideologies, in chronological order, showing their relation to the three plausible provocations to anti-Semitism. The authors contend that Judaism differed from the ancient religions by insisting on its validity for all peoples, denying the imperial relativism Malraux praises when he writes, "Rome welcomed into its Pantheon the gods of the defeated." Furthermore, they say that ancients who disliked the contemplative universalism of the early philosophers could scarcely tolerate the active universalism of Jews, and the doctrine of chosenness exasperated even the sturdy Tacitus.

Later religions imitated Jewish universalism and therefore opposed Judaism all the more vehemently.

> If Judaism remained valid, then Christianity was invalid. Therein lie the origins of Christian hatred of the Jews, the most enduring Jew-hatred in history.

A Christian must reply that Jesus teaches hatred of sin and the love of sinners—including alleged "Christ-killers." Insofar as one follows Christianity, one cannot accept the Jewish rejection of Jesus as Messiah, the Jewish rejection of the Gospel. But a Christian cannot extend his rejection of these aspects of Judaism to a hatred of Jews themselves and remain fully Christian. That many Christians sin by making just that exten-

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sion remains undeniably true and far from trivial.

Islam, equally universal and far more sanguinary, presents a more menacing face than Christianity. But the authors agree with contemporary Arab publicists who contend that Moslems have nonetheless treated Jews better than Christians have done. The further claim

of such publicists, that Moslems have treated Jews well, does not withstand serious examination. The authors observe that Yemen, the one Moslem country never colonized that harbored Jews, presents a reasonable "test case." Yemen fails that test, as it featured religiously sanctioned stonings, laws compelling Jews to dress as beggars, and the forced conversion of Jewish orphans. The latter two practices survived as late as the 1940's, when Jews solved the Yemeni "Jewish problem" by emigrating to Israel.

Modern political philosophy resulted in that popular thought-system, or ideology, called "the Enlightenment" by its publicists. Also universalists, Enlightenment partisans offered what is figured as Jewish emancipation in exchange for assimilation, the abandonment of Judaism. Many of the *philosophes*, including Voltaire and Mirabeau, attacked Judaism; a few did not. This suggests that Enlightenment anti-Semitism was not entirely accidental.

> Most modern Jews, themselves secular, have believed that the demise of religion would lead to the demise of antisemitism. Yet the twentieth century, the most secular century of history, has been the most antisemitic.

Neither has it been especially enlightened. The authors concede that "No violence accompanied Enlightenment anti-Semitism," but observed that both inheritors and critics of the Enlightenment—the former mostly on the left, the latter mostly on the right—added anti-capitalism to anticlericalism on the list of encouragements of Jew-hatred. "By the twentieth century, virtually every popular ideology in Europe wanted the Jews to disappear."

The authors sensibly avoid claiming that earlier anti-Semitisms caused the Holocaust.

> Over the preceding decades and centuries essential elements of Christianity, Marxism and socialism, nationalism, and Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment thought had ruled the existence of Jews to be intolerable. In the final analysis they all would have opposed what Hitler had done, but without them Hitler could not have done it.

After combining post-Enlightenment, "scientific" racial anti-Semitism with the "cultural" anti-Semitism of Wagner and German nationalist anti-Semitism, Hitler concluded that the final solution to the "Jewish problem" is not to convert the Jews but to kill them.

World War II destroyed the extreme right as a world power. The Holocaust shocked citizens of the commercial republics comprising what is considered the West—heirs of Christianity and the Enlightenment—into abandoning much of their anti-Semitism. It is perhaps a measure of the differences between the religion and ideology of the West and those of the East—Islam and Marxism-Leninism—that partisans of the latter pair have if anything increased their anti-Semitism. Anti-Zionism, "the first form of Jew-hatred to deny that it hates Jews," adds hypocrisy to the anti-Semites' ragbag of cherished vices. ("In the Museum of Religion and Atheism in Leningrad, an exhibit about Zionism and Israel designates the following as anti-Soviet *Zionist* material: Jewish prayer shawls, *tefillin* (phylacteries) and Passover Haggadahs.") While the authors can hardly be accused of fostering complacency about any source of anti-Semitism, they insist that the principal threats to Jews today no longer come from the right but from the left and from Moslems allied with the left. They argue that efforts to counteract anti-Semitism should be focused there.

Of five "possible response[s]" to contemporary anti-Semitism, the authors reject assimilation as an accommodation to evil. They regard Zionism as worthwhile but limited because Israel remains "the most hated country in the world." The central and most controversial response, seeking converts, is apparently dismissed: "As Judaism does not hold that it is the only way to God . . . missionizing is neither necessary nor desirable." Fighting anti-Semitic outbreaks by political and other means they judge effective only in regimes of liberty. The final and preferred response is to "affect the values of non-Jews" by disseminating "ethical monotheism": "The Jewish role is not to bring mankind to Judaism, but to universal moral law."

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Judaism, which provokes anti-Semitism, can also overcome it.

This paradoxical claim needs elaboration. The two basic principles of ethical monotheism are that "ethics need God"—that is, no ethical system can survive without a metaphysical foundation—and that "God's major demand is ethics." Ethics without God yields relativism, which yields defenselessness against the secular fanaticisms of left and right. "God without ethics" yields just such fanaticisms, and religious ones as well—"crusades and Qaddafi." Allegedly divine or substitute-divine prerogative ("God" or "History") inflame ambition, denigrate moderation, invite carnage.

To distinguish between "universal moral law" and Judaism while calling both variations of "ethical monotheism" requires a careful definition of both ethics and God. The doctrine of chosenness, the third of the three plausible Jewish provocations to anti-Semitism, becomes crucial here. The authors quote Yakov Malik, Soviet ambassador to the United Nations in October 1973, who cited this doctrine as "proof" that Zionism is racism. If public opinion polls are accurate, they show that Americans also dislike the claim of chosenness more than any other Jewish doctrine. The authors contend that chosenness does not entail superiority or privilege but obligation and suffering, that anyone who converts becomes a Jew and thereby becomes chosen. One may find a resemblance here to the Christian doctrine of grace or even, much more remotely, to the Marxist doctrine of class consciousness.

Chosenness is where Judaism and "universal moral law" can collide. Anti-Semitism "is ultimately a hatred of higher standards," the authors write, a vague formulation that comports well with "universal moral law." If Jew-hatred is hatred of people insofar as they partake of Judaism, and if Judaism teaches that some people choose God and that God chooses some people, impersonal laws or "standards" do not constitute absolute reality. Chosenness means not just a God-as-standard, a Platonic or neo-Platonic god, but a God who chooses. This is the only possible basis of the claims that "ethics need God" and that "God's major demand is ethics"; choice and ethics are inseparable. Not any choice, but the right choice: Judaism requires the God and the chosen people of Judaism. Upon reflection, then, the authors' rejection of "missionizing" turns out to be less than convincing—unless they prefer "universal moral law" to Judaism. If so, it is difficult to see what they mean.

For law does not necessarily imply a lawgiver in the traditional sense. Modern scientists, who act on principle as if atheism were true, seek "laws of nature," a nature without purpose. In a book that contains a discussion of anti-Semitism ranging from antiquity to the present, it is astonishing that there is not a single mention of Spinoza. A philosopher has described Spinoza as "the greatest man of Jewish origin who had openly denied the truth of Judaism and had ceased to belong to the Jewish people without becoming a Christian." What Spinoza became, of course, was a proponent of universal *natural* law. He is the first modern anti-Semite of Jewish origin. He leads political philosophers farther along the road that leads to Marx's class consciousness as a replacement for chosenness and grace. As with so much anti-Semitism, this has been futile.

Why the Jews? does not finally answer its own question. To do so would be to account for God and for rebellion against God. Judaism itself does not "account for" these. It praises and condemns; it asserts, refusing to suggest that human beings can explain the fundamental. We can explain some things partly, however, and these authors do better in that than most of their contemporaries. They do so by trying to take Judaism seriously in terms resembling its own terms instead of terms imposed by its enemies. We begin to understand anti-Semitism only if we rediscover the terms of Judaism. □

Notables

A Sly Dog

Most people undoubtedly first encountered Luis Buñuel (1900-1983) on a college campus, perhaps on a weeknight in an auditorium where earth science was taught during daylight hours. Who can forget sitting in the semidarkness and seeing the scene in *Un Chien Andalou*, the film that Buñuel made with Salvador Dali, that shows a razor slicing into an eyeball? That scene (and, to a lesser extent, the ones with the hundreds of ants) launched a filmmaking career. When Buñuel published the scenario to the film in 1928, he commented in a headnote:

> 'A successful film' is what the majority of people who saw it thought. But what can I do about people who are crazy for anything new, even if the novelty outrages their inmost convictions, or about a venal or insincere press, or about that pack of imbeciles who found beauty or poetry in what is, in essence, nothing less than a passionate appeal to murder.

Note that it is a statement, not a question, for he knew the answer and made it tangible during his career: he gave such people what they wanted. Henry Miller, for example, a man who thought with a lower portion of his anatomy, wrote in 1931: "They call Buñuel everything: traitor, anarchist, pervert, defamer, iconoclast. But lunatic they do not call him." For Miller and his ilk, *lunatic* was a positive sobriquet.

Buñuel, as a man in his twenties, took a key, put it in a lock, and heard it click. He never removed it; it served him well. He found a pat formula. This can be read between the lines of *My Last Sigh: The Autobiography of Luis Buñuel* (Alfred A. Knopf; New York). Certainly, he made some interesting films—*Virdiana, Los olvidados, The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*—but they are, after all, products of a career that was based on the backs of imbeciles. □

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From Nonsense to Understanding

***Who Were The Fascists: Social Roots of European Fascism;* Edited by Stein Ugelvik Larsen, Bernt Hagtvet, and Jan Petter Myklebust; Distributed by Columbia University Press; New York.**

Richard F. Hamilton: *Who Voted for Hitler?;* Princeton University Press; Princeton, NJ.

by Otto J. Scott

Who Were The Fascists consists of more than 800 pages of papers (replete with notes) which formed the basis of a conference held in Bergen, Norway in June 1974. The papers appear to cover an impressively broad area of observation: observations on mass societies, spiritual breakdown, societal conditions, varieties of fascism in Austria, Germany, Italy, Eastern Europe, southern and western Europe, and Scandinavia. But reading them is like dining in a restaurant in which the various dishes listed on the menu all turn out to be spaghetti. The spaghetti in this instance is served with a Marxist sauce, in which the rise of fascism and nazism and its cousins is traced to a lower-middle-class revolt. This unanimity of assumption reduces what at first appears to be an impressively broad academic conference into the academic equivalent of a cult faith meeting.

The absence of specificity in these papers regarding the targets (later the victims) of the nazis betrays the contributors' difficulty in confronting reality, which is reflected in the persistence of their class assumptions. The entire Marxist assumption of the universality of class conflict and class interest was, in fact, demolished by Karl Wittfogel in his classic *Oriental Despotism.* In this impressive work, later simplified by Igor Shafarevich in *The Socialist Phenomenon,* Wittfogel pointed out that ancient societies in Egypt, China, Peru, and other regions where agricultural systems were maintained by huge irrigation networks did not have classes: merely a despot and masses. Classes emerged with the Greeks. And Marx, being educated at a time when Germany (like Britain) was in passionate thrall to misreadings of ancient Greece, took the highly specialized and individualized West as the pattern of all humanity.

Richard F. Hamilton, on the other hand, has written an interesting and absorbing book. *Who Voted for Hitler?* is grounded in an examination of the voting records of a number of significant German regions. (That this has not already been done is only one of the surprises in Hamilton's book.)

The overall voting record is, of course, well-known. The nazis received a minuscule 2.6 percent of the German vote in 1928, and were considered an unimportant splinter party. In 1930 they jumped to 18.3 percent. And in July 1932, the nazis reached 37.3 percent of the vote —and were the largest single party in the body politic of Germany. Despite this, Hindenburg named Von Papen as Chancellor. Von Papen, however, needed votes in the Reichstag. Despite an election held in November 1932 in which the nazis lost 2 million votes, a Von Papen-engineered coalition resulted in Hitler's appointment as Chancellor. And in March 1933, a final election was held in which the nazis, then in control of the police and the radio, received 43.9 percent. By that time, Hitler was firmly in power.

By examining the voting records in depth, Dr. Hamilton provides a convincing explanation of the nazi ascendance. In 1928 the nazis shifted their major effort from the cities to the countryside. These regions, relatively uncanvassed, proved susceptible to their rhetoric. Entire villages and towns swung from the conservative parties to the nazis. But the swing was not across the board, and did not occur in all rural districts. The districts that went for the nazis were mainly Protestant; Catholic districts remained loyal to the Catholic Zentrum Party. Furthermore, the votes thus influenced were not restricted to lower-middle-class citizens. They included large as well as small landowners. In a number of small Protestant cities, towns, and villages, these large and small landowners were led in voting by both aristocrats and upper-middle-class leaders. Dr. Hamilton's evidence indicates that, far from inciting a lower-middle-class rebellion, the nazis captured the silk-stocking vote, and not the working class, the unemployed, the lumpen proletariat, or the bulk of the lower middle class. Hamilton, however, is careful to make clear that *some* members of all these groups did vote for the nazis. He devotes a considerable effort to proving that mass parties contain at least some elements of every class.

The nazis were energetic and innovative campaigners. They had true—and militant—believers; they had many skillful speakers; they *worked year-round.* They operated like a franchise, sending suggestions and guides but actually relying upon local leaders, fund-raisers, and vote-getters.

An important element in the nazis'

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rise was the decision of Alfred Hugenberg, head of the Conservative Party and a press magnate, to work cooperatively with them. This meant that nazi leaders such as Hitler, Göring, Goebbels, et al., had their speeches and appearances respectfully covered in Hugenberg's newspapers. This had the effect of making the nazis appear respectable from 1928 to 1932.

Many persons who voted for the nazis switched from conservative parties. The major reason for this, according to Hamilton, is that these parties stressed nationalism and opposition to the Versailles Treaty, harbored strands of anti-Semitism, and, in a number of fundamental respects, had programs that were similar to those of the nazis but which were less effectively presented.

In terms of general press coverage, Hamilton points out, most respectable Germans didn't read Julius Streicher's scandalous paper, but they did read the conservative press. That press spent much of its time portraying the communist menace in lurid terms, to such an extent that many Germans, by 1932, expected a recurrence of the communist revolutionary efforts of the immediate post-World War I period. The nazis were depicted as fighters against communists.

Hamilton has also made some other interesting observations about the German political situation in the early 1930's. Rising unemployment (due largely to a cutback in American investments) resulted in declining government revenues. The prevailing economic theory upon which Chancellor Bruning relied was one that involved curtailing social expenditures and raising taxes in order to balance the national budget. The Marxist parties (communists and Social Democrats) in the Reichstag would not agree to a cut in social services, and the conservatives would not agree to an increase in taxes. The result was governmental paralysis and an intensified atmosphere of crisis in 1932. Dr. Hamilton does not discuss the economic situation in Germany in detail, perhaps because it is outside his chosen area—election returns and how they were achieved. But it is worth noting that by 1932 the German government had intervened in the private sector to a marked degree. A major development in that intervention was the nationalization of the banks. This marked a final stage in economic control by the government—before Hitler.

Another factor assisting the nazis was the persistent revolutionary rhetoric of the communists and the continuous sight of the unemployed on the streets. In reality, the communists were less numerous than has been assumed: their core membership was only 120,000 in 1928, when their votes amounted to 4.5 million. A major communist error was in claiming to be a revolutionary rather than an electoral party. But a greater error was their decision in 1928 to attack the Social Democrats. This split the left, and opened the way for the minority nazis.

In February 1933, after Hitler's accession, the mayor of Altona, Max Brauer, asked the chairman of the Reichstag's communist faction, Ernst Torgler, to unite with his Social Democrats against the nazis. Torgler replied: "It doesn't enter our heads. The Nazis must take power. Then in four weeks the whole working class will be united under the leadership of the Communist Party." A few days later Brauer spoke to the Soviet ambassador, who repeated the same party line. On February 27, 1933, Hitler outlawed the German Communist Party.

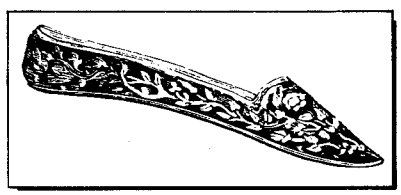
Of course, the communists and Social Democrats were not the only ones who misunderstood the nature of the nazi peril. Business groups, too, have come under fire, mostly from Marxists who charge that fascism is "the final stage of capitalism." Dr. Hamilton makes it clear that, while some big businessmen did help Hitler (notably Fritz Thyssen and Alfred Hugenberg), until he became politically dominant the majority of German industrialists had spread their money fairly widely, as a sort of insurance. Their interest in politics was minimal. The majority of businessmen found operating their enterprises a full-time task, and left politics to politicians. Once Hitler was in power, these businessmen learned that the world had changed. Summoned before Hitler, Göring, and Dr. Schacht, they coughed up three million marks at a single meeting—and from then on, danced to the nazi tune.

So did all of Germany. The nazis obtained power according to the forms of Weimar, which is to say, democratically. They then proceeded to eradicate democracy. They maintained the facade of capitalism in the sense of disparate incomes and titular ownership, but the

LIBERAL CULTURE

Adolescence at Fifty

In a recent interview with *Playboy,* actress Joan Collins further enriched that magazine's lustrous tradition of interviews with such deep thinkers as Sartre, Dali, and Toynbee by explaining some of the mysteries of celebrity neoteny. In assessing public responses to her recently published autobiography in which she disclosed all of the details of her three failed marriages and her dozens of affairs, Ms. Collins said: "The compartment that's easy to put me in is 'free thinking, sexy broad with a dirty mouth, who pretty much does what she wants.'" But reason for hope still exists: "There's more to me than that." Ms. Collins then added:



> I've only started to become mature in the past few years. I was really a kid.

What more? An aging amoeba? □

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freedom of business was leeched as thoroughly as political freedom. Business groups and associations were eliminated and a governmentally controlled "common front" was created for management, just as unions were wiped out and replaced by a labor "front." Germany shifted to a wartime economy with a command government, and by 1935 resistance was useless. Dr. Hamilton describes the result as Caesarism: rule by force over all citizens, including the former ruling class.

Why has this rise been so persistently misrepresented? The German people voted for a man who delivered what he did not promise; they have since been credited with voting for what they received. Hamilton's belief is that this angry and resentful explanation was provided by the refugees from Weimar. Of course, the explanations were Marxist: most of them were Social Democrats. Their party, which had ruled (though always in coalitions), may have been forced to make compromises in its years at the top, but it had retained its Marxist rhetoric (and reasoning). The very accomplishments in which it took the most pride—compulsory arbitration, an expensive unemployment-insurance program, and other welfare steps—had helped lead the German government into crisis. Notes Dr. Hamilton:

> In the constant stream of mutual praise and self-congratulation issued by the scholars themselves and by their devoted followers, some questions are steadfastly avoided. It is a rare occasion when one hears of criticisms such as those offered by Henry Pachter, himself an intellectual and a refugee of Hitler's Germany, who declared that 'we were a generation of first class mediocrities. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the myth of the Weimar intellectual was created by us refugees who needed so much to identify with one element, one memory or assumption of the paradise which so suddenly turned into hell.'

In selecting this quote, and in marshaling his evidence, Dr. Hamilton has done well. Intellectuals, he observed, are apt to be members of a self-segregating community with distinctive patterns of speech, dress, and thought. Such individuals lose contact with those outside their enclave; they sometimes cease to regard or even to be aware of the ordinary facts of life that motivate the average person. In such intellectual circles, certain assumptions acquire permanence. The Communist Manifesto of 1848 contains a tirade against "small tradespeople, shopkeepers and retired tradesmen." Later, the same document castigates "the dangerous class, the social scum (lumpenproletariat), that passively rotting mass whose . . . conditions of life prepare it . . . for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue." Dr. Hamilton calls this sort of reasoning *scapegoating*. And in conclusion he again cites Pachter, who said: "The great discovery . . . was that the dividing line is not between Left and Right but between decent people and political gangsters, between tolerant people and totalitarians."

To demolish a myth is a difficult but worthwhile task. Richard Hamilton has exposed as nonsense most of the 48 papers in *Who Were the Fascists*. He has also enlarged our understanding not only of what happened in Germany, but of the perils of democracy as well. □

A Telltale Heart

Susan Fromberg Schaeffer: *The Madness of a Seduced Woman*; E. P. Dutton; New York.

by Diane Long Hoeveler

The specter of solipsism has long haunted the romantic temperament, and romantic eros in particular. The sense that one's self is the locus and source of all value and meaning in the universe has characterized both the critical celebrations and the denunciations of romanticism as a movement. Susan Fromberg Schaeffer has written a veritable exposé of the female mind as polluted and finally destroyed by romanticism. Hers is a study of that selfless love of another that is actually its opposite, an egotistical mania that absorbs the loved one as part of oneself.

It is one thing to criticize the romantic mentality as dangerous, limited, and egocentric from a philosophical standpoint, and another to present in fiction a feminist attack on romanticism because of its psychological, social, and emotional devastation of middle-class women. Schaeffer's scheme is not new; she is tripping along in the literary footsteps of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, George Eliot's *Adam Bede*, Richardson's *Clarissa*, and many other novelistic presentations of the seduction and betrayal of women. A scene reminiscent of the pig slaughtering in Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* begins the novel, and in many ways, the aura of Hardy pervades this work. As the two women in *Jude* were split between spirit and flesh, the heroine in Schaeffer's book experiences a continual warfare between her intellect and her body. In a recurring dream she finds a doll's head on a table and can never locate and attach the head to its body. Such a dream, Schaeffer implies, haunts all women who are taught to endorse their intellects at the expense of their emotions. Women are fragmented and then forced into accepting dangerously idealistic notions of love, marriage, and identity because of their wholesale indoctrination in romanticism. The madness of this particular "seduced" woman is, by extension, the madness of all middle-class women with little meaningful education, time on their hands, and nothing to do but partake of the illusion of love.

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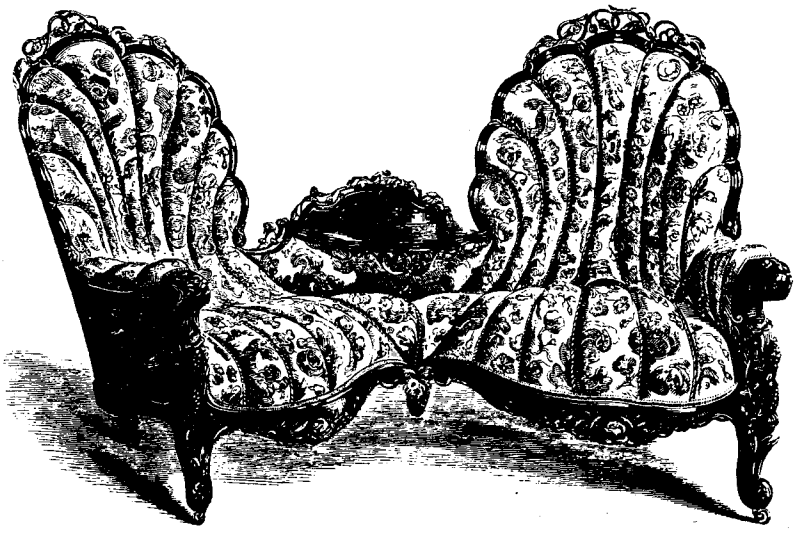
The Madness of a Seduced Woman depicts in minute detail the life and mind of Agnes Dempster, a Vermont farm girl who leaves an unhappy home for life in Montpelier around 1897. Her intense love affair with Frank Holt, a stonecutter, results in an abortion and her abandonment shortly thereafter. Although she has threatened to kill herself and has bought a gun, Frank refuses to take her threats seriously. In a stupor, she goes to Frank's new girlfriend, lures her to a field, shoots her through the head, and then turns the gun on herself. Agnes, however, survives and faces trial for murder. During the trial she is forced to hear her lover initially deny her, deny their love, and, when confronted with the facts, admit that he left her because her desires were "insatiable." Because her lawyer and a psychiatrist are convinced that Agnes was, as she describes herself, "more sinned against than sinning," she is not condemned to hang, but instead is committed to life in an insane asylum. Agnes's life in the asylum is depicted in lesser detail, as is her life after her release at the age of 40. As she dies she dreams one last time of the doll, this time with both the head and body attached, whole and unified. One is left with the overwhelming sense of the waste, pain, and suffering she has expended in her pursuit to unify head and heart, to live with both her emotions and reason simultaneously. *The Madness of a Seduced Woman* provides, then, a microcosmic portrait of the extremes in the life of a young woman around the turn of the century—from the genteel needlework to an illegal and gruesomely detailed abortion on a dirty mattress.

This novel must be a feminist attack on romanticism's destructive effects on women because it would be difficult to take it at face value. In fact, one is tempted to read it as high camp, a modern, tongue-in-cheek retelling of the 19th-century seduction tales. Schaeffer's book is a virtual catalog of themes and issues currently of concern to feminist writers. In books such as Nancy Chodorow's *The Reproduction of Mothering* and Helen Dinnerstein's *The Mermaid and the Minotaur,* women are depicted as indoctrinated not primarily by fathers or masculine figures, but by mothers, who are more potently dangerous because they have internalized patriarchal values and attitudes. Such is Agnes's fate, for she is raised primarily by her mother and grandmother, the three generations of women locked in a sort of matricidal cycle. Each woman seeks to escape the fate of her predecessor while at the same time fearing that she will be replaced by a younger version of herself.

Schaeffer's book also eschews the depiction of women as victims in favor of the more recent version of women as powerful, albeit passively aggressive shapers of their own destinies. But ironically, when Agnes does act in a direct way to control her life—e.g., the abortion and the shooting—her actions are only self-destructive and destructive. Women can assume power, Schaeffer implies, only by denying an aspect of their being and becoming like men, violent and careless of life. To trade the position of victim for that of victimizer is hardly an ennobling one. As Agnes herself recognizes, all human beings are caught on a wheel, an inescapable web of entanglements and emotions that ensure life's continuation.

Elizabeth Hardwick, in her *Seduction and Betrayal,* reminds us that "Sex can no longer be the germ, the seed of fiction. Sex is an episode, most properly conveyed in an episodic manner, quickly, often ironically." Schaeffer's book is contemporary fiction aping the sensibilities and attitudes of 19th-century literature, so it is difficult to determine how the book is to be read. If the author intends for us to sympathize with the heroine, then she has failed, as Agnes is altogether too extreme, too willful to evoke our affection. At the same time, she is incredibly vapid. She reads only romantic novels and at one point tells her lover that she "would not mind being a cow if [she] could get rid of [her] mind." She often has dreams of being a puppet. And Agnes also wallows in self-pity and fails as an adult to accept responsibility for her own actions. She sees her mother as an "intelligent storm bent on destroying [my] life," and thinks that "fifty years after firing the shot, I still blame my mother." In order to escape her childhood misery which, one has to conclude, was largely self-inflicted, Agnes dreams the fatal dream of ideal love: "Somewhere, I knew, was the one ideal love for whom I was intended, the one perfect love who



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would catch me up in my own wheel." But after the disastrous experience and the long recovery, Agnes realizes that "only those who hate the real world do what I did. I tried to create an ideal world."

Agnes's first attachment is to a "good" man who offers her simple happiness, security, and fidelity. But she rejects him; she seeks out unhappiness because there is, after all, something very noble in suffering. She chooses a man who has caused other abortions, other disappointments. She even sees the specter of her future self in a former girlfriend of Frank, a woman who also had an abortion and is consumed by bitterness and self-pity, called "mad" by her friends and family. Agnes's love for Frank, however, is not just romantic; it is specifically Shelleyan. She tells a friend that she wants "someone like me," an ideal version of herself. One thinks in this context of Shelley's description of love in his essay "On Love." There he pictures love as an impulse that "thirsts after its likeness," and as a "mirror whose surface reflects only the forms of purity and brightness; a soul within our soul." For Shelley, the "invisible and unattainable point to which Love tends" is the point where "the chords of two exquisite lyres" become "one delightful voice." The impulse to merge totally with the beloved is the Shelleyan ideal of love. The transforming power of love, the ability of love to make one divine, these were the sacred credos of Shelleyan eros. Adapted as a literal philosophy of life by people with little or no appreciation of the complexity of human emotions, these attitudes proved fatal.

Agnes's dream of love is hopelessly Shelleyan, or platonic. Once she resolves to love Frank, she thinks: "There had to be another person who fit you perfectly so that the two of you together formed one whole." And once she has chosen Frank as her ideal, she muses that "the fabric of this life had ripped neatly to reveal the perfect world for which I was always looking, and that he was the perfect man for whom I had been looking." Frank is perfect not only because Agnes imagines him to be a hero, but because he is a competent stonecutter and thus, in her eyes, an artist. She dreams of gaining happiness on earth by fostering Frank's artwork, which she sees as "perfect" and "permanent." She wants, that is, to be a romantic muse, an Eternal Feminine who leads him to great heights of artistic immortality, her immortality ensured through her guidance and inspiration.

Agnes was attracted to Frank by his carving of a mother and baby on a tombstone, which is a fitting image, given her vehement rejection of motherhood because of her disdain for the natural world. She proudly thinks that she will be different from her mother and all women who are trapped by their bodies. Her goal, as she describes it, is to "transcend my own nature." But her lawyer draws this lesson from Agnes's fate: "we're all biological creatures, and the greatest of us know that and work with biology, not against it." Only late in her life does Agnes realize that she has put her mind and her body in opposition. She explains:

> Well, in our day it was the fashion to neglect the mind and fulfill one's biological destiny, and in every age there are rebels, and I was one. I didn't want children, or so I thought. But in the end, not having a child was the worst punishment visited upon me. Today, some women are beginning to talk of the body as if it were a mousetrap waiting to spring shut on the mind, and I suppose the body *is* like that, but the mind is there, too, waiting to spring on the body.

After writing her farewell suicide note to Frank, Agnes muses her most dangerous Shelleyan thought: "I believed that the real world was worthless, a pale imitation of the true world which our imagination had created between us." Such extreme thinking leads her to self-delusion, to a world where her desires are the only reality. But she has no sense of her own identity; she quite literally does not know who she is, and therefore she has sought the easy solution of finding herself in her beloved. But she finally realizes after many years that it is no real answer: two people cannot become one ideal person, platonic metaphysics notwithstanding. Only as an adult, after many years within the asylum, does she grasp what she calls the reality of life: "that life was hard . . . impermanence was at the very heart of things, and that, therefore, there was no such thing as perfection on this earth." This conclusion comes as no small admission to Agnes the idealist.

Agnes eventually realizes that she must take control of her life. As she finally comes to accept, "we're animals. Deformed animals, animals with minds." But this conclusion merely involves the author in the romanticism she condemns, for she gives us human nature only as two extremes—pure spirit or pure animal. The work would succeed if it could realistically convey a sense of the human personality as it struggles with its inner compulsions to balance mind and body, but instead it indicates that woman's struggle with head and heart tends to hopeless extremes. Ultimately there is a failure of imagination in this view, for clearly the struggle can be won in a synthesis between these implausible polar oppositions. □

Fleeting Truths

In the section "Winners Relevant to the Rock Era" in his *Year by Year in the Rock Era,* author Herb Hendler writes:

> Although directly concerned with popular music, the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences' Grammy award winners . . . are not listed with this grouping because much trade opinion considers the voting structure adult-oriented and the awarding group too far removed from the rock market.

"Adult-oriented"? "Removed from the rock market"? Is Boy George of the British group Culture Club (Best New Artists of 1983 [sic]) a representation of somebody's dad? Or is that "mom"? □

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COMMENDABLES

A Gloaming

Raymond Aron: *The Committed Observer;* Interviews with Jean-Louis Missika and Dominique Wolton; Regnery Gateway; Chicago.

On 17 October 1983, the light in the world of the intellect and action became dimmed with the passing of critic, scholar, thinker, teacher, journalist Raymond Aron. Aron, of course, left much behind him—40 books, enlightened students, journalism, lectures, and, indeed, a tradition. Yet even the power of texts like *The Opium of the Intellectuals* notwithstanding, Aron's departure, like his existence, was somehow less noticed than that of his school chum Jean-Paul Sartre's. The difference between the two situations, perhaps, is that while Sartre turgidly dallied on the extremes, a popular pastime for the postmodern intelligentsia, Aron set himself foursquare in the middle of things. As he told two French television interviewers of the class (intellectually, that is) of '68, people decided "that I was really a man of the Right because I based my policy in reality." *Reality,* in contemporary cant, is a dirty word.

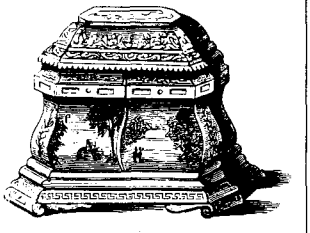
The Committed Observer consists of the edited transcripts of three television programs that focused on the periods from 1930-1947, 1947-1967, and 1967-1980. Aron was born in 1905. The title comes from a comment that he made about how he had given himself "the task, when I was twenty-five, of being a committed observer of history." His commitment had a purpose, a focus, which set it apart from that of his pie-in-the-sky existential peers. As Alain Besançon wrote of Aron in an obituary entitled "The Sage of a Generation" that appears in the journal *Survey* (Autumn-Winter 1983), "The first commandment of the intellectual is to love the truth. He followed this point scrupulously: he never tired of seeking, thinking and speaking the truth." Such was the light that left our midst. □

Another "Miracle" Drug?

Charlaine Harris: *A Secret Rage;* Houghton Mifflin: Boston.

A Secret Rage deals with a subject so violent, so dehumanizing, and so debilitating that the majority of its victims will not even report the event to the police—will, indeed, confide in no one. The crime, of course, is rape. It occurs in the smallest of towns, in the most respectable of neighborhoods, to all kinds of women. The rapist is rarely discriminatory in his choice of victims; though there are instances when he may actually seek out a certain one, rape is usually inflicted on the woman unfortunate enough to be available at the given moment. It matters not to the rapist if she is young or old, married or single, beautiful or a plain Jane, or, in some instances, large with child.

In a recent showing of *60 Minutes,* doctors, lawyers, and convicted rapists, interviewed while serving their "time" in correctional facilities, tried to assert that a rapist is not a criminal but a physically ill man, driven to the act by his inability to control overwhelming sexual urges—just another flare-up of the old hormones. (Much the same, evidently, as a person with a cold cannot suppress the urge to sneeze.) These men are now undergoing a program of treatment whereby they are given injections of a new "experimental" drug that will suppress these urges and free them from this illness. How comforting this thought must be for the multitudes of women who live behind locked doors and closed shutters, fearful of leaving their homes or of being left alone in a room because they have already been violated, very possibly at



knife or gunpoint, by one of these poor sick men. On the *60 Minutes* segment, the doctors, rapists, and interviewers were all but accusing women of spreading the sickness by the mere circumstance of their existence as women. A woman raped twice by the same man (who, incidentally, was captured by neighbors as he returned to violate her for a third time) was asked by the interviewer if she felt that her attacker was really, as the doctors stated, a sick man rather than a criminal. Her answer: a definitive *No.* (The rapist, it should be noted, was not incarcerated even after pleading guilty to the crime, but placed instead on the treatment program and is today walking around a free man.) The Christian way is to forgive and forget; it is doubtful, however, even if a rape victim will forgive, she will ever be able to forget.

Ms. Harris sets her story not in New York City, but in a small town in Tennessee. Her protagonist is raped and not only reports the crime to the local authorities, but teams with another of the rapist's victims to pursue their attacker. The book is fiction; the degradation, humiliation, and, finally, anger that these women experience are not. (KW) □

The Stylized Self

Peter Ackroyd: *The Last Testament of Oscar Wilde: A Novel;* Harper & Row: New York.

Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde. Even his name evokes a certain something that is hard to define but which always hovers over Wilde. To be sure the spirit, or vapor, is sweetly sick and pungent, appealing and revolting. His was a dualistic nature. There was, of course, the writer whose literary classicism bordered on conservatism. It was, however, amputated by the decadent poses and mannerisms —and certainly by the private perversities that he tried to gild ("the love that dare not speak its name") while in the dock. Although it is possible to separate an artist from his art, that act is extremely difficult with Wilde, for his life, as he displayed it, was his art. The two natures must exist in one being; Wilde did not have an Other, a fictitious brother a la Ernest in *The Importance of Being Earnest.*

Wilde stated, in *Lady Windermere's Fan,* that "life is far too important a thing ever to talk seriously about it." In Peter Ackroyd's fictional diary of Wilde's final months, life is taken to be very important, the more so as it is slipping away from the

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bloated, deserted, muted, spurned, exiled Wilde, from the man who, Ackroyd's Wilde says, has become "a monument . . . to the grosser aspects of urban civilization." This Wilde doesn't figure himself as a garish headstone, a mauve sepulcher, but "to be an example of modern art." Perhaps he was; perhaps that was the cause of his fall; doesn't much modern art close in on itself to the exclusion of all human concerns; isn't it merely an artistic but egotistical dead end? □

Right On!

William F. Buckley, Jr.: *The Story of Henri Tod;* Doubleday; Garden City, NY.

With the latest novel, Mr. Buckley came up with more politics than espionage. But Blackford Oakes is in it, and it's reassuring that our man sees what should be seen, knows what should be known, distrusts what should be distrusted, and supports what should be supported. And reads what should be read—the *National Review,* of course, in its infancy. □

Life as Lived—and Lost

***The Lisle Letters: An Abridgement;* Edited by Muriel St. Clare Byrne;** University of Chicago Press; Chicago.

The modern, informal communicator has, basically, two options available: the service and/or equipment rendered by AT&T (or one of the multiplicities that it has spawned like guppies) or packaged and processed remarks by Hallmark ("When you care to send the very best . . .") Imagine what documentary historians will be left with some 400 years from now: telephone directories and transcripts of dubiously recorded telephone calls; cards showing the visage of Ziggy. Given such evidence, they'll undoubtedly conclude that America, in the late-20th century, experienced what can be designated as "The Great Degression."

During the years from 1533 to 1540, when Henry VIII ruled England (and Thomas Cromwell peaked and plummeted), there were, of course, no telephones, street-corner mailboxes, Western Union offices, Bic pens. . . . One didn't flick a switch to get light; office supplies weren't available at some Tudorian K-Mart. Modern amenities are so ubiquitous that many tend not to think about their absence when gazing back on the past; somehow, daily newspapers, TV sets, radios, and paperback books just seem to be there, lurking in the background along with refrigerators, microwave ovens, and no-wax floors.

The Lisle Letters are documents of daily life of the period in question, when such things weren't even dreamed of by visionaries. As their editor Muriel St. Clair Byrne puts it, "Here is the very earth—not the background, but the soil itself, . . . the last moment that was Tudor England." Miss Byrne collected over 1900 of the letters sent between and among the Lisles and associates, people who were involved not only in the politics of the day (which helps explain the literacy), but also enmeshed in the dailiness of living. Briget Boland has reduced Miss Byrne's six volumes to one, thus making the documents accessible to those who must fulfill their daily routines today. Certainly, the letters are full of history and drama. More importantly, they shed light onto some of the paltriness of contemporaneity. □

IN FOCUS

Signals of Strength

Charlie A. Beckwith and Donald Knox: *Delta Force;* Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; San Diego.

by Candace de Russy

This warrior's account will leave its mark above all as hero-saga in a land by no means lacking in heroes but oblivious and often antagonistic to their deeds. Nor will it be forgotten as testimony in a vituperative controversy about American military will and competency. It will also be seminal as documentary about an emerging form of American defensive action, counter-terrorism. Due to intensifying global terrorism, this force may prove increasingly the defense of U.S. citizens abroad and, alas,

within this country. Military historians will be well served by retired Colonel Charlie Beckwith and author Donald Knox's detailed recounting of the genesis, nature, and ill-starred mission of America's first behind-the-lines unit, Delta Force.

The formation of Delta Force was impeded for 14 years by a succession of military bureaucrats who were basically uninterested in Beckwith's plan. They seem to have been absorbed with old habits and lacking in vigilance and vision. One can only be wary of these encrusted tendencies, recalling Edward Teller's observation that "defense requires ingenuity, ever more ingenuity." The idea for the force derived from Beckwith's combat experience and his admiration for the British Special Air Service (SAS), a commando elite in which he participated as an exchange officer. Beckwith's resolve to forge a standing rescue force was especially fortified when he commanded a Green Beret rescue mission of enemy-monitoring civilians at Plei Me, under savage attack by the North Vietnamese Army.

The unit's members were often introverted, self-subsistent, and persevering—and able to "take out" enemies without pause or remorse. Their preparation included exercises in storming mock terrorist strongholds with maximum aggression—in seven seconds. Delta Force was put to a real test, known as Operation Eagle Claw, in which it was to evacuate the 52 U.S. Embassy hostages in Iran in 1980. Beckwith describes the landing at the Iranian staging site, Desert One, the sandstorm that crippled Navy Sea Stallion helicopters intended for transport, the excruciating decision to turn back because of inadequate airlift, and the blazing collision of refueling aircraft in which eight perished.

On another level Beckwith's story must be viewed as prime testimony in the controversy

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stemming primarily from journalist William Safire's charge of "Beckwithism" (i.e., the "loss of nerve" and "excess of prudence"), which Safire claims influenced the aborting of the mission. However, Beckwith's testimony clearly shows that it was judicious not to go forward with only five of the original eight helicopters for two reasons: a heavy airlift requirement necessitating no less than six vehicles and the realistic fear of further malfunctions in the heat of escape from Tehran. Safire, the armchair scribe bolstering his case against a man of action, selectively implies the loss of merely one, not three, helicopters. Furthermore, he ignores the fact that Beckwith earlier requested—and was refused for valid reasons—more than two backup helicopters. Beckwith's history of valor further demonstrates that the disaster of Eagle Claw was not the result of pusillanimity: he fought with distinction in Korea and was almost killed in Vietnam. While the commander's bravery is dramatically evinced throughout the tales of his military struggles, its heroic but unflamboyant counterpart, prudence, is also to be noted. Meticulous planning and rehearsal of missions, reliance on reconnaissance, attention to the perils of transport of men and supplies in combat—these and other cautious habits temper his fearlessness. They also bespeak his regard for human life.

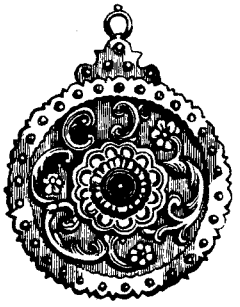
Toward the end of his life Douglas MacArthur warned of an approaching time when Americans might no longer fight for their country. Yet this predicted ascendance of antiheroes will remain uncertain while defenders like the men of Delta Force remain. □

Of Metaphysics and Moon Launches

Percy G. Adams: *Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel;* The University Press of Kentucky; Lexington, KY.

The American moon-landing in July 1969 remarkably demonstrated both what technology can and cannot do. It can put a man on the moon; it cannot make meaningful any journey whatever, even one concluded with the high-sounding declaration "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." For although science can measure travel, make it faster, longer, and more comfortable, and can even predict its physical consequences, only metaphysics—not science—can give the movement of a person from point A to point B any cognitive significance. When society once possessed a communal metaphysics, travel had meaning, not only for writers depicting fictive cosmic motions (such as Dante celebrating his ascent through the "blessed Spheres" or Milton portraying the flight of Satan through Chaos) but also for less gifted mortals as they made their pilgrimages to Rome, Canterbury, or other religious centers, or even as they made the universal pilgrimage from cradle to Divine Judgment. When Judeo-Christian metaphysics lost its credibility for the educated elite, the journey, *any* journey, had to find a new ground for meaning.

As Percy Adams demonstrates in *Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel,* the novel constitutes one of the most important modern efforts to establish and investigate a new paradigm for the significance of travel. "Few indeed," writes Adams, "are the writers who do not at some time send their characters journeying." However, as a modern genre distinctively rooted in nominalism and the individual ego, the novel



posits its meanings on the shakiest of epistemological foundations. Though Adams insists upon various scholarly qualifications to the designation of *Don Quixote* as "the first modern novel," Cervantes' work nonetheless well illustrates the genre's perennial dilemma: the crusades of modern man must be defined either by the madness of utter subjectivism or the emptiness of naturalistic skepticism. Indeed, contrary to the claim made by Wilbur Cross that Sterne set the novel back a hundred years, *Tristram Shandy* and *Sentimental Journey* demonstrated the intrinsic solipsism of the novelistic perspective more than a century before Joyce and Proust finally arrived at the same conclusion. In the meantime, the Victorian effort to make marriage the metaphysical center of the novel, and therefore the sufficient explanation for human movement, inevitably collapsed, on the one hand into a sentimental formula and on the other into the bleak pessimism of *The Return of the Native, An American Tragedy,* or *Tender is the Night.* Thus while popular novels began cruising their readers into the private fantasy of South Sea romance, serious fiction dropped its auditors into the abyss.

It appears, then, that the most promising recent efforts in the novel are those struggling to shift its philosophic base by introducing transcendent and Realist elements. This is clearly the direction that works such as Bellow's *Mr. Sammler's Planet,* Walker's *Love in the Ruins,* and O'Connor's *The Violent Bear It Away* are moving, and with such movement all other human movements acquire renewed meaning. (BC) □

Fighting For Scraps

Kenn Miller: *Tiger, The Lurp Dog;* Atlantic/Little, Brown; Boston.

In no activity does man so fully demonstrate the ambiguities of his superiority over other creatures as in war. Animals kill one another, but only humans do it so efficiently and in the name of morality, politics, or religion. Of course, wartime rhetoric often recognizes the humanity of only one side, reducing the other side to beasts, "dogs" or "swine" typically. Presumably, this makes the killing easier, but it is never the truth. Even when the ideas and government advanced by an enemy's leaders are brutal and dehumanizing, as in naziism or communism, the common soldiers who become most of the casualties largely ignore official ideology and fight for more humane reasons, such as simple pride in their unit or loyalty to home and comrades. Those waging war against totalitarianism usually share the same private motives, but may also justly affirm the validity of their national cause.

These were realities ignored by the rabid peace forces during

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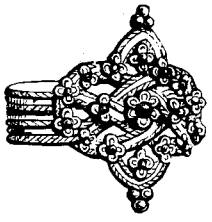
the Vietnam War. Denouncing American servicemen as "fascist dogs," "baby-killers," and "capitalist pigs," they demonstrated their human superiority by chanting obscenities, by waving Vietcong flags and burning American ones, and by murdering civilians with peace bombs. In *Tiger, The Lurp Dog* Kenn Miller shows that the men in Vietnam were just that, men, brave men who resented the slanders of the supercilious "peacecreeps." The only subhuman Miller depicts is a unit mascot, with no perceptible fascist tendencies. In his compellingly detailed portrayal of a Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol ("Lurp") platoon, he shows us volunteers who fight with calm skill under fire, not imperialist lackeys, conscience-stricken draftees, nor bloodthirsty maniacs.

But if Miller's characters are too human and too daring to deserve the scornful epithets of the left, they are not worthy of any profound admiration, either. Their commitment seems to be strictly to each other and to their exacting craft, not to America nor to American ideals, which one of the soldiers compares to the tiresome slogans of the North



Vietnamese. Family ties are weak or nonexistent, and the only character who expresses strongly anticommunist attitudes is a fanatical Cuban. Freedom is not the goal of these warriors, but a burden only to be borne with the distractions of drink, gambling, and prostitutes. Skepticism tinged with bitterness pervades the book: the foxholes are filled with simpleminded agnostics. Eventually, despite their disciplined valor, all of the major human figures die, with no apparent hope that their sacrifice will bring heaven or an improved earth. Only in such a value vacuum could Tiger, a shiftless but plucky mongrel, become the sentimental symbol of what really endures. Fortunately, thousands of soldiers who demonstrated just as much bravery and ability in Vietnam as Tiger's masters understood far deeper values than they or their creator. Whether such men died for these values in Vietnam or continue to contend for them in American military or civilian life, they deserve our deepest thanks. For without such human dogfaces between us and the Kremlin, we will all join Tiger in the pound. (BC) □

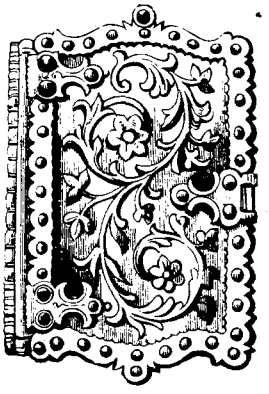
Perceptibles

Jonathan Culler: *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism;* Cornell University Press; Ithaca, NY.

Although modern critical debates—which some designate *metacriticism*—tend to be conducted in a jargon that makes one pine for something more lucid—like Kant on a bad day—they are, semi-impermeability notwithstanding, lively. So are rattlesnakes. The French, who are, by and large, responsible, still brandish finely honed épées (albeit with blunted ends). Jonathan Culler, a domestic product, tries to bring a certain amount of order to the subject of deconstruction. His efforts toward clearing things up and then arranging them are laudable, but we wonder: can order be achieved in a game wherein all of the players seem to be involved in different activities?

Samuel T. Francis: *Power and History: The Political Thought of James Burnham;* University Press of America; Washington, D.C.

"I thought it fitter," wrote Machiavelli in *The Prince,* "to follow the effectual truth of the matter, than the imagination thereof." As a young man, James Burnham turned away from Trotsky and toward Machiavelli because he too found it "fitter" to pursue truth than to indulge the imagination. The consequence of that turning was some of the most prescient, probing, and influential political analyses of the 20th century, which in 1983 earned him the Richard M. Weaver Award of the Ingersoll Prizes. In works such as *The Managerial Revolution, The Struggle for the World,* and *The Suicide of the West,* he realistically assessed how modern shifts in socioeconomic structures were affecting the political dynamics of global power and he explained why those shifts left anti-Machiavellian liberals unable to resist communism's totalitarian challenge. The short introduction to those analyses that Samuel T. Francis provides



in *Power and History* is helpful; however, a study which races over "The Philosophical Foundations of Burnham's Political Thought" in a mere 15 pages will probably leave readers more hungry than satisfied. Yet, we remain assured that a 20th-century American who can so cogently renew centuries-old Florentine insights will attract many other scholars and commentators in the future. □

WASTE OF MONEY

More Equal Than Thou

Judith A. Baer: *Equality Under the Constitution: Reclaiming the Fourteenth Amendment;* Cornell University Press; Ithaca, NY.

Among the amendments to the Constitution, none were ever more morally justified nor more desperately needed than the three which abolished slavery and gave blacks the rights of citizenship and of equal protection under the law. Now, however, the very declarations which once granted blacks their freedom are being twisted into invidious insults against their dignity. In books such as *Equality Under the Constitution,* left-liberal egalitarians seek to transform this constitutional termination of black slavery into a legal weapon for attacking parental authority and for promoting homosexual license and reverse discrimination. Thus moral, capable, adult blacks are unjustly equated with sexual deviants, rebellious adolescents, and incompetent preference-seekers.

Written as a "broad interpreta-

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tion" of the 14th Amendment, Ms. Baer's argument for equality under the Constitution is actually the elevation of leftist propaganda far above the Constitution. In her procrustean "reclamation" of the legislative intent and the philosophic underpinnings of the amendment at issue, Ms. Baer evades, trashes, and truncates more than she reclaims. For instance, she chooses to "stick to the eighteenth century" in interpreting *life* as an "inalienable right" so that she can dodge the abortion issue as merely "vexing" (and antithetical to her feminist agenda), but then she opens "the pursuit of happiness" into a veritable cornucopia of Federal protections for 20th-century aberrations abominable to 18th-century sensibilities. (Thomas Jefferson would be more than mildly surprised to find his phrase hijacked into a defense of legalized sodomy.) Similarly, Ms. Baer cites the Christian doctrine of the equality of souls before God as the historical basis of "equal respect" as a legal right of every American, but dismisses as irrelevant to our age every Christian conception of sexual ethics or familial integrity.

With "equal respect" for the aspirations to power of everyone on the far left, and utter contempt for the sane reasoning of most jurists, philosophers, and scholars located anywhere else on the continuum, she stoops to the same kind of tendentious disingenuity in her analysis of affirmative action. After bewailing the past discrimination against minorities and women, she incredibly posits the equity of quotified "benign discrimination" as superior to the "confused and arbitrary" practice of awarding employment and educational opportunities solely on the basis of merit, as manifest in test scores and grades. She conveniently fails to note that Federal regulations specifying just what fraction of one's geneology must be black (or Eskimo) in order to warrant preferential treatment are disturbingly similar to the nazi "Jew Laws" defining just what degree of racial purity kept one out of the gas chambers. Though Ms. Baer terms the practice "benign discrimination," it has actually cast the malevolent shadow of unfair advantage on all women and minorities whose talent and intelligence do not need governmental inflation, while spawning many bitter jokes among white males about dyeing their skin dark and getting a sex-change operation so they can get into medical, law, or graduate school. Certainly, after finishing Ms. Baer's book it is hard not to think that whoever admitted her to graduate school employed the most "benign" discrimination possible, far removed from the most rudimentary standards of merit or intelligence. (BC) □

Of Criticism and Credos

Chris Baldick: *The Social Mission of English Criticism, 1848-1932;* Clarendon/Oxford University Press; New York.

Among major religions, Marxism is remarkable for its popularity among Western intellectuals. Officially, of course, Marxism represents itself as an atheistic science. Nonetheless, it features many strikingly religious characteristics: its canonization of saints (St. Karl, St. Lenin, St. Mao, etc.) to whom numerous miracles are attributed and to whom iconic shrines are erected; its enforced orthodoxy of dogma; its zealous army of missionaries preaching the regeneration of profit-sinning humankind in the socialist "new man"; and its anticipation of an apocalyptic "end of history" ushering in a new heaven and new earth. Given Marxism's actual performance wherever it has been implemented, it might even properly be called an otherworldly religion, a pie-in-the-sky faith. Nonetheless, Marxism does offer its devotees something increasingly hard to find in the West: a doctrine larger than the self. Such a doctrine can make possible a sense of purpose, a willingness to sacrifice, and a feeling of oneness with others likewise devoted. Because it prescribes a well-defined set of standards by which all of life is to be evaluated, it can also make possible a systematic and rigorous literary criticism.

Though Christian ethics and doctrine formed an accepted bedrock in the criticism of Dryden, Addison and Steele, and Johnson, no such creedal foundation is visible in most English criticism since Matthew Arnold declared that Poetry itself was to be modern man's religion. As a Marxist critic, Chris Baldick will have no other gods before Dialectical Materialism and its only begotten son, Class Struggle; therefore, he rejects the Arnoldian faith. Indeed, in *The Social Mission of English Criticism, 1848-1932,* Dr. Baldick proves that despite Arnold's professed "disinterestedness" the doctrinal amorphousness of his new religion forced him and his followers—the early T. S. Eliot, I. A. Richards, and the Leavises—into irreconcilable contradictions and groundless subjectivism. Much of what these critics stood for in their fight for cultural and social continuity was quite valuable, but lacking any undergirding metaphysic, they could justify their critical pronouncements only by reference to "the well-rounded personality," "the health of the mind," "flexibility," and other equally vague abstractions. Thus, even as these writers demanded more cultural power for the critic-priest as an antidote to mass culture and social disintegration, the terms in which they appealed for communal reverence became increasingly private, arbitrary, and opaque.

For a well-catechized Marxist, such critics make an easy mark for a radical jihad; accordingly, Dr. Baldick has little trouble exposing the logical holes in the robes of this competing critical priesthood. But what Dr. Baldick does not attack is actually more revealing than what he does. His treatment of Eliot leaves untouched the older, "reactionary" Eliot, who came to realize after his conversion to Anglo-Catholicism that literary criticism must have a theological component and that religion not art (and emphatically not communism) must provide the basis for overcoming social antagonisms. Dr. Baldick is no fool: he knows that Marxist evangelists can rush in only where angels do not tread. (BC) □

You Are What You Wear

Walter Isaacson: *Pro and Con;* G. P. Putnam's Sons; New York.

Few people since the time of Swift and Pope have taken into account the correlation between matters sartorial and cerebral.

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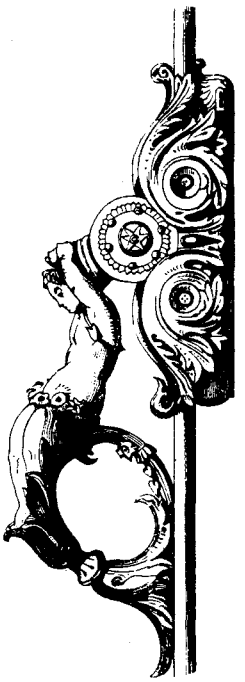
That is, in periods when dress is but a minor concern, thinking is rude and shabby. When care and deliberation are applied to personal raiment, then the ideas produced are finer. One might throw up any number of fops as a challenge to the concept, but then it should become quite clear that their choice of ribbons and silks was motivated by forces similar to those that orient sheep. True dandies like Disraeli and Wilde are proofs that there is an intersection between fashion and intellect. Consider the slovenly hippies of the 1960's: did any one of them ever formulate a thought beyond a grunt for sex and drugs? Gaze at a photograph of the like-suited Politburo: it takes a great leap of imagination or a fall into delusion to figure that anything noble is going on beneath the chintzy grey façades.

In contemporary America fashion is mass-produced; designer labels, ranging from surnames to animal images, are stamped out like fenders for downsized Chevys. Thanks to the proliferation of brand-name clothes, people *think* that they are fashionable by tugging them on, but that is only an indication of how far thinking has deteriorated. One doesn't have to spend an inordinate amount of time picking out his or her daily wear; getting "dressed-up" is a similarly easy task: Calvin's on top, below, and beneath is a safe bet. In effect, then, fashion—or what passes for it on the ready-to-wear racks at I. Magnin and K-mart—is packaged like the foods in a TV dinner. Similarly, thinking—or what passes for it in virtually all social settings—is fitted into little tinny trays. One can pick up a copy of *People* and not only know who's who but also what's what (and vice versa in both cases)—until the next glossy issue hits the bookstore or grocery market. Another of Time Inc.'s progeny is Walter Isaacson, who is an associate editor of the brand-name magazine—the one that offers the mirrors that permit a person to become the man or woman of the year, every year. Isaacson's *Pro and Con* is the ultimate (of this year's model, anyway) in pseudofashionable thinking: it provides facts and opinions both for and against 54 items listed in alphabetical order from abortion to voluntary euthanasia, with matters of signal concern like the designated hitter rule in baseball



and returning pop bottles in between. Each item is a bite-sized chunk (sort of like one of those greasy little frozen egg rolls in both form and substance)—just right for reading while trying to determine whether Ralph Lauren jeans are more suitable than Stanley Blacker denims for the evening's nosh. Those who have exhausted the pyrite in *The People's Book of Lists* and similar collections of trivia (now, in our dislightened age, known as *Significa*) will be thrilled to the furthest reaches of their walnut-sized brains by *Pro and Con*. □

*(**Comment** cont. from page 5)*

Heilbroner surveys our prospects and advises us that the future is, at best, authoritarian; the world can no longer afford, let alone emulate, the American experiment in democracy.

But this form of decadence is not new. Henry Adams believed that history moves in stages, from instinct through religion, through science, and finally to this century of the supersensual which is decadent to the core. Like others of similar sensibility, Adams would have returned to the religion of the Middle Ages but realized that that was not a program likely to commend itself to the modern mind. Writing to his brother he asked, "How can we hope to see a new world, a new civilization, or life? To my mind we are at the end; and the one thing I thank God for is that we have no children." In the view of tragic decadence, the dream, no matter how worthy it may have been, is wasted. "HURRY UP PLEASE IT'S TIME."

These are the three faces, or the three masks, of decadence. They do not disturb most of our fellow citizens. Decadence is not an entry in the minds of most Americans. Those who are disturbed by it try variously to construct a counterculture to decadence. From the bully pulpit there issues old-fashioned American boosterism, and that may help. Moral majoritarians call America back to the Bible, and that may help more than it hurts. Intellectuals who once espoused secular solutions now speak of the need for a spiritual revival and a renewed sense of private and public virtue, and that is greatly to be desired.

But however we counter it, decadence must be addressed in its several manifestations. There is an appropriate word for each type of decadence. Liberationist decadence is adolescent; hermetic decadence is precious; tragic decadence is resigned. The first face scowls with fury at the reality that refuses to conform to the self. The second smiles, sometimes smirks, and frequently quivers at a world that denies its own. The third is all fortitude, or tears.

The antidote to decadence is not nature but hope. Not simplistic optimism, but hope well grounded in reason and experience. Such hope, if it is to be credible, must have comprehended all the reasons for denying the world, escaping from the world, despairing of the world. It must not signify contempt for the adolescent, the precious, and the resigned. After all, they are participants in the culture that we would help renew; they have their reasons which we can understand and even respect. We have other reasons of which we would persuade them. Alfred North Whitehead said that the only simplicity that is to be trusted is that which is on the far side of complexity. The only hope that will be trusted is the hope that is on the far side of decadence.

—Richard John Neuhaus

The Rev. Neuhaus is the director of The Rockford Institute-New York, The Center on Religion and Society.

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Return to Remedial Physics

***Silkwood;* Directed by Mike Nichols; Written by Nora Ephron and Alice Arlen; ABC Motion Pictures/Twentieth-Century Fox.**

by Stephen Macaulay

One of the latest causes of self-righteousness, posturing, and enlightened indignation is not a person or place, but a thing: a group of heavy metals that disintegrate and emit various rays (alpha, beta, gamma), or radioactive materials. Everybody knows that radioactive materials are deadly, period. Mention the physicians who practice nuclear medicine, and you'll receive a chilling glare accompanied by a cold shoulder. A point around which the concerned have flocked is the movie *Silkwood.* Not only have the predictable sources of liberal holier-than-thou movie reviewing come out babbling about the movie's correctitude and wonder, but even *The Wall Street Journal* published a minipanegyric to what not only has a pro-blue collar/anti-management theme (perhaps the *Journal* was smitten with "higher social consciousness"), but which is, quite simply, an awful movie by every criticism associated with not only social normality, but even textbook reviewing.

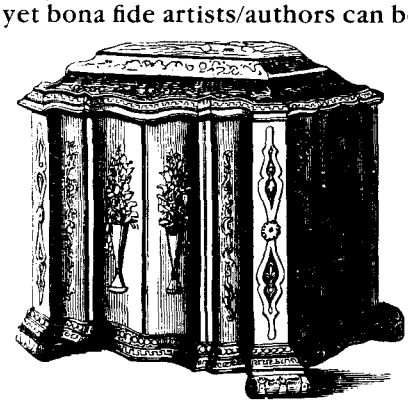
It's obvious that *Silkwood* was made in order to Make a Statement. It's not surprising that an arm of the network that has set itself up as the public's video conscience (from nuclear war to incest, it knows all), ABC, is behind *Silkwood,* the story of a proletarian heroine of the 1930's style who was thrust into the 1970's in order to confront Big Power. The corporate executives behind the movie would undoubtedly say that it was made "in the public's interest." Possible radioactive contamination due to faulty management controls or employee foul-ups *is* something that the public should be concerned about. But is a lousy movie like *Silkwood* truly a medium of education or is it merely one of propaganda, full of half-truths, distortions, and innuendoes? The answer should be obvious, yet even educated reviewers seem to have missed it.

No layman would dare tell a particle physicist how to operate a microwave oven, yet that same person somehow feels qualified to speak on the subject of nuclear energy, based on information gleaned from such movies, TV reports, and the popular print media. This is what's called *chutzpah* or *hubris* in *Webster's.* Take the rather ordinary process of welding, which is central to *Silkwood.* Everybody knows that two pieces of metal welded together become a piece that is less strong and durable than one whole piece. After all, if one breaks the handle off of a coffee cup and then glues it back on, the joints are more fragile than the whole piece was prior to breakage. The metaphor works, but the reality breaks it: what "everybody knows" about welding is incorrect—a weld, properly made, is the strongest point of an assembly, one that's stronger than the joined materials. But who wants to fool around with facts when bad fiction with the socially acceptable message is so much more appealing? □

Madness, Artists & the Cinema

Richard Koszarski: *The Man You Loved to Hate: Erich von Stroheim and Hollywood;* Oxford University Press; New York.

Filmmakers, perhaps due to the relative infancy of their chosen medium, are not really considered to be artists in America, at least outside the pages of specialized journals. Celebrities, yes; auteurs, no. One reason why this is so might be that the preponderant number of productions are ephemeral, but then one has to take into account the fact that most bookstores are filled with flotsam yet bona fide artists/authors can be



discerned. A more basic reason might be that people simply don't think very highly of directors. When a film director of yore (i.e., pre-California film school period) is crudely imagined, the figure that tends to emerge is that of a Prussian wearing a beret, monocle, and jackboots who is holding a riding crop in one hand and a megaphone in the other. That image is based on Erich von Stroheim, whose role as an actor, from *For France* in 1917 to *Sunset Boulevard* in 1950, was based on the elements of such a character. Von Stroheim (himself a film-like creation, given that the touch of nobility was a pure fiction) was a man who tried to be an artist in Hollywood. He was not only an actor—indeed, his acting was often a means to ends: money and visibility—but a writer, designer, and, above all, director. About von Stroheim's efforts in the first feature that he made, *Blind Husbands* (1918), in which he performed all four activities, Joel W. Finler notes in his *Stroheim* (University of California Press; Berkeley; 1968), "Such a formidable directoral debut was unmatched in the cinema until over twenty years later when Orson Welles made *Citizen Kane.*" The former wunderkind, of course, is now most well known for his ample appearance in TV wine commercials (which have now been pulled); only buffs say "Welles" with sober reverence.

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Richard Koszarski's *The Man You Loved to Hate* is a study of what can be considered, in ordinary respects, a semimadman. Von Stroheim, flying in the face of studio czars including Irving Thalberg, made films that were thousands of feet longer than were acceptable for almost any theaters—then or now. A thoroughgoing believer in naturalism, von Stroheim created painstakingly real sets, virtually authentic environments. Since he couldn't control the other element of the naturalist equation, heredity, with regard to his actors, he often abused them—sometimes physically—so that they could cry, laugh, suffer, and generally *feel* in the ways he thought proper. His excesses are obvious. To film what is considered his masterpiece, *Greed* (1924), for example, von Stroheim brought the cast and crew to Death Valley in the middle of the summer, where the temperatures were well over 100°F. One of the main actors is quoted as remembering: "Out of 41 men, 14 fell ill and had to be sent back. When the picture was finished I had lost 27 pounds and was ill in hospital, delirious with fever." Von Stroheim didn't have to go to such extremes for technical reasons, as desert backlots were available. His artistic requirements, however, could be sated no other way. His commitment is unquestionable; that he had any real imagination is dubious.

Von Stroheim, although an unusual figure in the history of film, is in no way unique. For example, Eleanor Coppola's *Notes* (Simon & Schuster; New York; 1979), Francis Ford Coppola's wife's view of the making of *Apocalypse Now,* which is certainly more an impressionistic film than naturalistic one, is a tale full of personal suffering—physical, emotional, spiritual—willingly undertaken for the sake of creating not merely a "movie," but a work of "art." Francis Coppola is a technically accomplished

director who could quite easily crank out works like spaghetti from a pasta machine, but he has consistently worked to create something that's a cut above. Von Stroheim often found himself financially beset as a result of his own excessive requirements; the bankruptcy situation surrounding Zoetrope Studios is well known.

Since von Stroheim's works have been sliced, diced, and riced, an assessment of them can only be a tentative one. His contribution to the film industry has probably been slight, given the fact that it has become an *industry* and not an *atelier.* The broader question of the filmmaker as artist remains. Coppola, Spielberg, Lucas, Scorsese—are they more than story-telling technicians? The answer today, by general consensus, would probably be no: general releases aren't thought to be art; art films are only seen by a few. However, given the decline of literacy in this country and the crumbling of literary standards, perhaps the now-aborning generation of videotrons will look back some years hence and see film as art and literature as artifact. Being directed by von Stroheim was probably less discomforting than that prospect. (SM) □

Hacking in Hollywood

***The Lonely Guy;* Directed by Arthur Hiller; Based on a novel by Bruce Jay Friedman; Adapted by Neil Simon; Screenplay by Ed Weinberger and Stan Daniels; Universal.**

When movies learned to talk, their need for men and women who had learned how to write was insatiable. During the 1920's and 30's there was a second gold rush, as those scratching out a living in New York chucked it all and headed off to the land where the sun was bright and the contracts were fat. It's hard to find a writer who made a career for him or herself in that period who didn't work for one mogul or another or, given the temperaments of writers and producers, more than one mogul. While it is fairly easy to conceive of a Fitzgerald working in Hollywood—given both the nature of his novels and stories and the affluent style of living that he made himself accustomed to—it's hard to picture a would-be Nobel laureate toiling among the sound stages. But Faulkner was no exception. While the working conditions would have to be somewhat different, it is possible to imagine a *Humboldt's Gift* or a *Dean's December* being scripted by their author for a celluloid fling. Perhaps Faulkner is really a secret rule, one that is dreamed about by those writers who have achieved life on a higher plane of existence.

The demand for properties that were first found between hard covers dropped off a bit, but lately Hollywood seems to be sending out the message that if the plot has seen ink, then it's ready to roll the cameras. Consider: *Terms of Endearment, Gorky Park, Yentl,* and on and on and on. These works simply prove that those who have not learned to read novels inhabit a very restricted universe: it's not that all of the original pieces are so good, just that the movies are, in themselves, so revolting. One of the latest to be added to the pile of cinematic fertilizer is based on marshmallow-weight novelist Bruce Jay Friedman's *The Lonely Guy's Book of Life.* Arthur

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Hiller, the man who directed Neil Simon's *The Out-of-Towners* (1970) and *Plaza Suite* (1971), worked with a script that at some point Simon doctored to make *The Lonely Guy,* and utilized the services of comedian Steve Martin, one of the many "bright, young talents" spawned by TV's *Saturday Night Live* whose hair is now falling out, and whose promise has yet to be realized. The most enormous thing about the movie is its triviality. Sure, it's tough being an ordinary-looking single man today; while people are moving in the fast lane in single's bars, one can readily feel stuck in a tollbooth behind a gate that won't rise. Drinking bottled water with a twist by stratagem, wearing Perry Ellis, dousing oneself with Paco Rabanne, driving a 300 ZX—these and similar ploys may or may not work, but so what? Every human knows that this is so; it's not a lesson that needs to be taught by a cadre of half-wits. (SM) □

MUSIC

Technical Problems

One facet of music that's often unacknowledged is that technology has a large effect on it, not merely on the creation of music (i.e., through the development of new or somehow modified instruments), but on it's reception. For example, in 1948 John Bardeen, William Shockley, and Walter Brattain invented the transistor. By the mid-50's, the transistor made its way into portable radios. This period, of course, saw the advent of people like Elvis, Bill Haley, and DJ Alan Freed. Unlike the large, home-based vacuum-tube radios, transistor radios featured small, lousy speakers that emitted all types of music with a tinny sound. Rock and roll was, due to its very structure and the technique with which it was recorded, little affected by the radios' acoustic limitations. Consequently, a correlation between the number of transistor radios sold and the rise in popularity of rock and roll music could, no doubt, be charted. Classical music, in those days, was considered to be "high-fidelity" music, something that was not played on a teenager's hi-fi set. Moreover, except for programs like Texaco-sponsored Saturday afternoon performances from the Met, classical music tended to be broadcast on the FM band; most inexpensive transistor radios of the early 60's picked up only AM stations (a change occurred when the so-called "underground" stations sprouted on FM). The original "long-hair stuff," then, was isolated.

The people who had a high level of interest in classical music often had a similar concern with the quality of their home audio equipment. Some teens had tape recorders in the 60's; the devices were little more than novelties. Classical music aficionados, generally to a man, had massive reel-to-reel setups and were always careful to brush the stylus on their changer before putting it to vinyl. In effect, this group of people formed a cult of quality acoustics from which transistor radio-touting teens were barred. Even the vocabularies were different, not only with regard to performers and subgenres of music, but even when it came to acquiring discs. That is, teens "scraped together" fragments of their allowances and "picked up the latest 45." The other listeners "invested in recordings."

The division remains, even though rock music has become more *technologically* sophisticated than classical music is. During the past several years, ads have appeared in publications like *Rolling Stone* for audio systems that classical music lovers of recent vintage would die an operatic death for. The sound quality of these assemblages of pre-amps, amps, tuners, changers with servo drives, multiple-way speakers, etc. is truly astonishing. What is, perhaps, more jarring is the fidelity of the Walkman-type devices that have proliferated of late in a manner similar to that of the then-newly developed transistor radios. By and large, the market for the portable stereos consists of young people; given the fact that the devices generally sell for approximately $100, teens can, and do, afford them. In effect, the young person of today who owns recordings (discs or tapes) by The Human League, A Flock of Seagulls, and other technopop groups tends to have playing equipment that's on a par with that owned by the typical lover of Beethoven, Brahms, etc. As a result, there now exists a possibility for the division to be breached, if not closed. It's unlikely that the move will be in the direction from Wagner to Thomas Dolby, but the other way.

Three recent releases on the Nonesuch label could serve as effective stepping stones for someone who is interested in, after 20 years, giving The Beatles the boot and becoming involved with modern classical music. Step one is provided by *The Barry Tuckwell Wind*

Quintet (Nonesuch 78022), which features renditions of works by 20th-century composers Barber, Milhaud, Arnold, Ligeti, and Ibert. Given the instrumentation, the music wouldn't sound *too* foreign to virgin ears. Indeed, some of Ligeti's music was used in the

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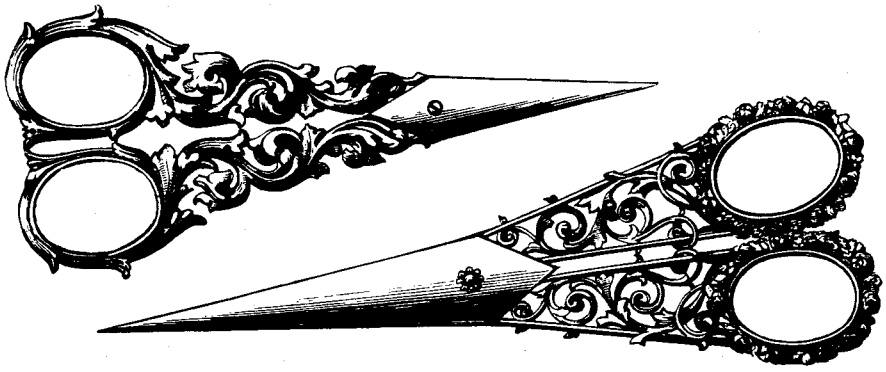
film *2001,* which is, of course, a campus favorite. Moreover, many have remarked that rock music tends to be monotonous; Samuel Barber's works



aren't exactly scintillating. Next, the move could be through William Bolcom's *Second Sonata/Duo Fantasy/ Graceful Ghost* (Nonesuch 79058), on which Bolcom plays piano and Sergiu Luca plays violin. Of the three Bolcom-penned works, *Graceful Ghost: Concert Variation for Violin and Piano* has an uncommon accessibility: it is formally hermetic, yet has a riff-like texture that bespeaks an intimacy with jazz, a musical form that has inspired, among others, rock musicians.

Finally, there is Morton Subotnick's *Ascent Into Air/A Fluttering of Wings* (Nonesuch 78020-1), which are parts one and three of a musical drama entitled *The Double Life of Amphibians,* a title that brings to mind Stevie Wonder's most curious work, *The Secret Life of Plants.* The previous assertion about the "technological" superiority of rock music will crumble before composers like Subotnick. *Ascent Into Air* is a work for 10 instruments (in this case the CalArts Twentieth Century Players under the direction of Stephen Mosko) and "computer generated sound" (the drone is controlled by, or modulated by, the performances of the cellists). *A Fluttering of Wings,* performed by the Juilliard String Quartet, includes an "electronic ghost score," which has the effect of shifting the instrumental sounds and which requires a good speaker system. Modern music enthusiasts who would rather listen to fingernails brushed across chalkboards than works by Eno, Fripp, etc. would find Subotnick to be deadly.

While some might think that the closing of the gap between the two types of listeners would be a laudatory act, there is a danger involved. Consider the images of Alex in Kubrick's rendition of Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange,* in his bedroom listening to "the glorious Ludwig von." Small minds can be devastated by grand themes. (SM) □

Dialing for Dollars

One of the reasons why virtually all of the well-known performers of what is designated "rock" cannot be considered artists in even the broadest senses of the category is that they are essentially businessmen and women. Certainly, their very appearances and the content of their noises (which have, admittedly, various melodic values) seem to belie this assertion, but the fact remains that even though the days of payola are, purportedly, ancient history, bottom lines are still the prime movers. The costs involved in producing, packaging, and marketing records are phenomenal, which explains why most record companies are parts of conglomerates. When Elvis worked clubs in Memphis in 1954, he made $10 per night. Nowadays, $10 is good for a single album and some change that wouldn't even buy a meal at McDonald's. Because of the development of cable television, which resulted in channels and channels and channels of air space, rock went more visual than ever before. Once, fans would tune into *American Bandstand* on Saturday mornings and watch, for the most part, teens dancing to popular records. Now, at any time, day or night, they can dial MTV and see their favorite players mugging on "videos." When Coppola was making *Apocalypse Now,* he dreamed of making brief, videotaped features. This concept has been bastardized for MTV: no mere lip syncs, this is *theater.* One consequence is that the careers of many zillion-sellers, such as Duran Duran, have been made by the music network. Already-established personalities, those who were built primarily on radio and concert appearances, have felt the tugs of the marketplace and so recognize that their images must be refurbished—updated. If dollar signs didn't dance in their heads, they would undoubtedly stick to what they once, as many of them often put it, "believed in." But no.

Jackson Browne is paradigmatic. In one grand leap he's gone from an electrified folk-rock player to a turquoise-tinted leather-suit-wearing chump whose music is on par with that played at high school graduation parties. But the *look* is right, "with it." However, his *Lawyers in Love* album (Elektra/ Asylum), which features the updated Browne, has merely a tough facade. The interior is gutless. The woman vocalist who once added strength and resiliency to some of Browne's cuts, Rosemary Butler, is not on that album, nor did she accompany him on the supporting tour. That she has what he is pretending to is obvious on her solo album, *Rose* (Capitol Records), which is proof that when it comes to music, the audio is still more important than the visual. Unfortunately, the success of MTV seems to indicate that posing is usurping performance in a field wherein the latter has not been all that noteworthy. After all, as all of the rock businessmen and women know, it pays to advertise, and video is a key sales tool. (SM) □

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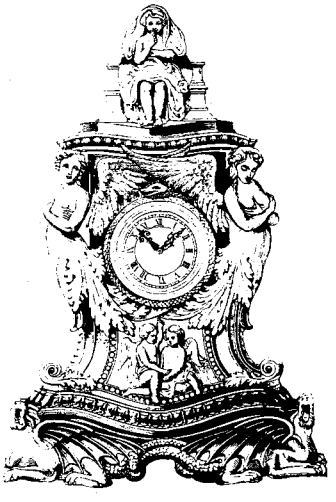
Letter from Brazil: The Consuming Crisis

by Stephen L. Tanner

Returning to Brazil for five months as a Senior Fulbright Lecturer after an absence of seven years, I expected to see considerable change. Things happen rapidly in such a developing nation. And indeed Brazil today presents striking contrasts to the Brazil I knew for two years in the mid-1970's. There has been a general amnesty, exiles have returned, and habeas corpus has been reestablished. The labor movement is growing, the press is free, and an independent Congress meets regularly. Direct elections in 1982 for Congress and for state and municipal offices demonstrated the vitality of Brazil's multiparty system. Opposition parties currently control the House of Representatives and a third of the seats in the Senate. The opposition also won 10 of the 23 state governorships, including the key states of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Minas Gerais. It is possible that the presidential election next year will be direct.

On the other hand, the economy, which was in rapid expansion in the 1970's, is now in a state of crisis. Prolonged recession and a $100 billion foreign debt combined with devastating floods in the south and drought in the northeast (no rain for over five years) have severely crippled the country. The rate of inflation is staggering (recently as high as 160 percent), unemployment has filled the streets with vendors of everything from cheap manufactured items to individual cigarettes; in several parts of the country people are sacking food markets.

As I considered such changes and observed Brazilian society in general, this visit became, paradoxically, a revealing and unsettling education in American culture. The influence of the U.S. is very strong there and is often revealed in a distorted or exaggerated fashion. This is particularly true in the case of advertising. Television and magazine advertising in Brazil is slick, flashy, and high-powered. It often outdoes its American models in technique and glamour, and consequently gives things an extra twist, another turn of the screw, which sometimes converts them into caricature. The erotic element in certain American jeans commercials, for example, becomes unabashed and provocative nudity in the Brazilian counterparts. Snob appeal becomes appallingly blatant, especially when the wealthy blond in a cigarette ad is compared with the ragged black who sifts through garbage each day for morsels of food. The appeal of speed in automobile ads



and of technological gimmickry in electronics and appliance ads—which are the common stock of American advertising—are pushed to an additional and disconcerting degree of exaggeration. Just as a caricature portrait puts the subject's distinctive features in bold relief, Brazilian advertising makes the inanities and grotesqueries of American advertising (and, alas, of many aspects of American culture) embarrassingly apparent. My impression was much like that of a parent who, having become accustomed to his children's barbaric table manners at home, is suddenly startled and humiliated while watching them eat in public.

Automobile advertising is a typical example. America's love affair with the automobile seems an innocent flirtation compared with Brazil's obsessive passion. The large cities are jammed with cars. The newspapers have regular auto feature sections. And since mass ownership of cars is a relatively recent development in Brazil, one gets the impression of a nation behaving like a 16-year-old with his first car—constantly laying rubber and squealing around corners. Recent car commercials on American television have emphasized speed and maneuverability. Often the ads make a point of informing us that the car is on a test track or a highway officially cleared of traffic. Americans are accustomed to cars and advertising and recognize the element of fantasy, then, in all this. An American can be influenced to buy through the romantic sports car appeal and yet enjoy his car without living out the fantasy on local streets.

It is different in Brazil. There the commercials ignore the element of track or officially sanctioned highway. With spectacular photography and glamorous actors they show cars going even faster and more recklessly, sometimes on sidewalks and stairways. Many Brazilian drivers fail to discount the element of fantasy. It is much more the rule than the exception to see them speeding on crowded city streets, swerving from lane to lane, taking corners on two wheels, flashing by within inches of pedestrians. Even gentle and gracious people are suddenly transformed behind the wheel of a car into something like stuntmen for *Smokey and the Bandit.* Since the laws of physics are regularly defied during motoring on its streets and elsewhere,

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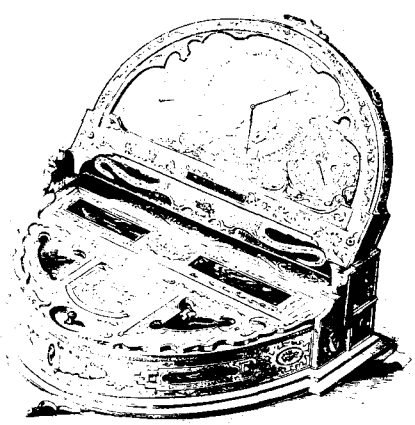
Brazil has the highest accident rate per capita in the world. In São Paulo, according to a Brazilian newscast, someone is run over by a car every 20 minutes. There are waiting lists for new fenders.

But even more alarming than the example of speed and recklessness provided by American movies and advertising is the general model of consumerism that we export. A certain car that in 1981 cost 433,000 cruzeiros now costs more than 3,700,000 cruzeiros. Consider the consequences when the example of American advertising stimulates consumer appetites in a country with this kind of inflation, a country in which drought-stricken people are dying of starvation, a country in which many people are homeless and live out of garbage cans. Moreover, the consumer appetite is linked with the impatience for technological advancement that is creating environmental disaster. As a Brazilian columnist noted, Brazilians suffer from an incurable ailment: the overevaluation of everything foreign and the correlative underevaluation of their own things. He went on to point out the folly of a country at Brazil's state of development, on the verge of bankruptcy, imitating America's immoderate brand of consumerism.



It is hard to believe that the skyrocketing crime rate in Brazil is not linked with the increasing appetites and expectations aroused by American-style advertising. Wherever I visited around the country, everyone had a personal robbery story to tell. One woman who told me such a story on Tuesday was fatally shot on a bus on Thursday by a thief demanding her jewelry.

Veja, Brazil's answer to *Time*, recently published an interview with David Ogilvy, "the father of advertising," as they called him. When asked if it is advisable to expose people in underdeveloped countries to advertising for products most of them will not be able to buy, he answered, "I think that is something for philosophers and politicians to decide. I am just an advertising man who knows how to sell products." So there we are.

I encountered much more anti-American sentiment this visit. Perhaps it is partly a result of indebtedness; we seldom like people to whom we owe lots of money, particularly when the interest is gouging. Perhaps it is partly due to the increasing animosity throughout the world toward America's alleged interventionist foreign policy. I am afraid it is easy to think of a number of reasons why Brazilians should think less of us, many of those reasons having as much to do with our image in the international press as with genuine grievances. But I wonder if one reason is not the values we export, the values expressed or implied in the popular music, advertising, television programming, and movies we send their way. They clamor for such stuff, or at least the promoters among them do, but there may be an only partly conscious resentment born both from the low quality of those values and the Brazilian self-disgust for being so vulnerable to them. In any case, I return to the United States with a heightened critical awareness of the dangers inherent in the cheap, self-indulgent, profligate, and morally debilitating characteristics of American mass culture. And I am even more deeply puzzled as to why the best things in our culture seem unexportable. □

THE AMERICAN PROSCENIUM

At the Crossroads

Not long ago, Mr. Theodore White, connoisseur of presidential elections, crafted a well-reasoned, though intellectually prefabricated, article for the *New York Times Magazine*. His was a solid analysis of this country's shifting political geology: some major social forces are in the process of crystallizing into defined political powers, moved by ideas which would aspire to "sharpen" the notion of equality—the prime component of America's ethos. Blacks and women will soon constitute— according to Mr. White—powerful blocks of concentrated social and political efforts that will translate themselves into new electoral realities. Correctly, even astutely, Mr. White observed that these exertions will promote a new element in the American political geography, namely a potential to fight not only for group interests but for the entire system of group values. This practice, Mr. White was keen enough to notice, may generate a fundamental conflict between the newly promoted, particular group values and the traditional, time-honored notions of equality of the kind which form the bedrock of the entire Western democratic civilization and whose triumph in America was essential to the origin of interest groups in the first place.

This was as far as Mr. White went in his exploration of the new social phenomena. What he failed to mine are the more profound and more disturbing implications of his findings. The fragmentation he describes is not only sociopolitical but, above all, moral and cultural in its nature; it may even have an eschatological dimension. What is ultimately at stake is our future as a nation. Modern nations are communities with a sense of common tradition, destiny, and system of existential and moral values. If a nation allows

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separate, alternate, or autonomous systems of values to evolve within its body, it ceases to be a nation and becomes a society—an organism unable to survive in larger stretches of history. In the past, the formative substances of a nation derived from commonly shared perceptions of ethnic homogeneity, or religious beliefs, or acquisitive instincts nurtured by feelings of tribal superiority.

America, of course, in spite of all its inherent centrifugal forces, is still a nation—as she wished to be since her inception. She evolved the most modern norms of a commonwealth, that is, a functional body of laws, tradition, and conventions; she possesses the most advanced tabernacle and holy scroll which endow her with an exemplary nationhood envied by other polities. It is an ideological nation, conceived in the name of common faith and a vision of future that transcended the immediate and coalesced into a historical ideal. Up to now, when blacks and women sought an improvement of condition, everything was acceptable. Once they wish to superimpose their particular code of values over the hitherto generally accepted *nomos* and ethos, we are in a danger of becoming a society—at a time when statehoods without nationhoods can no longer survive on this planet. Once black and feminist tenets become more important than, or prevail over, American tenets in individual consciences, we all are lost. However, fortunately, reading Mr. White, one soon notices that he, in fact, deals in synthetic summaries. And once we realize that both among blacks and women there still exist a plentitude of thinking individuals, things do not look so gloomy. □

Little Ado About Something

The United States Information Agency—a government outfit that's appeared under various names and which is little known for either the originality of its ideas or for its bureaucratic lightness of touch—came up with another poky script for a new *School for Scandal,* D.C.-style. Allegedly, it concocted a proscription list of people who should not represent this country's amalgamated genius and savvy abroad because of their ideological untrustworthiness. The list, as it was furiously propelled by the liberal press into the national awareness, is, in fact, an exercise in the bizarre. What James Schlesinger, David Brinkley, and Stansfield Turner did to get on it, we will never understand. However, the mere fact that a Federal agency of conservative administration is reluctant to send out into the world Messrs. Ralph Nader, Allen Ginsberg, or Tom Wicker as spokesmen for America's sociopolitical concerns should not be surprising. Delegating Mr. Walter Cronkite, our telegenic sweetheart (the man who recently found Orwellian big brotherism in American technology but failed to notice it in the Soviet power structure), as a standard bearer of American intellectual potential could be seen, in some European countries, as a parody—certainly not a field of creativity for our government's propaganda arm. The fact that Prof. J. K. Galbraith, Mrs. Coretta Scott King, and Ms. Betty Friedan are viewed with unwillingness by Reagan's USIA people should be put into proper perspective by a simple question: Were Prof. Milton Friedman, Phyllis Schlafly, Irving Kristol, Russell Kirk, James Burnham ever asked by the Kennedy, Johnson, and Carter information agencies to represent American mind and principles in foreign countries? (For that matter, Nixon's and Ford's agencies were not much better: some men on the very top have changed, but their operating staff culled all their wisdom from the *New York Times*-Ivy League-*Time*-CBS axis as ever before.) Certainly, American pluralism suffers, but it was not Reagan's people who began to gnaw and nibble at its living flesh. □

In the Mail

***Center Journal* (Winter, 1983) edited by Kerry J. Koller; Center for Christian Studies; Notre Dame, IN.** On things Catholic, in every sense of the word.

***Taiwan: Facing Mounting Threats* by Martin L. Lasater; The Heritage Foundation; Washington, DC.** Chances are, given the U.S. government's overtures to the People's Republic of China, officials in Taipei don't sleep well.

***Rights and Regulation: Ethical, Political, and Economic Issues* edited by Tibor R. Machan and M. Bruce Johnson; Pacific Institute for Public Policy Research; San Francisco, CA.** Mr. Machan concludes: "In the last analysis, government regulation has no proper place within a just legal and political system. Human reason, not force (except in response to force) marks the genuine humanity of a system of law." Blueprint for Utopia?

***Greek Tragedy: Modern Essays in Criticism* edited by Erich Segal; Harper & Row; New York.** Given his knowledge about true tragedy, we are even more astonished at Dr. Segal's *Love Story.*

***A Need to Testify: Portraits of Lauro de Bosis, Ruth Draper, Gaetano Salvemini, Ignazio Silone* by Iris Origo; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; San Diego.** An aristocrat, an actress, an academic, and an artist versus Mussolini.

***Bedbugs* by Clive Sinclair; Allison & Busby/Shocken Books; New York.** Infectious.

***The McNeil Century: The Life and Times of an Island Prison* by Paul W. Keve; Nelson-Hall; Chicago.** Isn't it a bit much to designate the 20th century with the name of a prison in Puget Sound?

***The Age of Charisma* by Arthur Schweitzer; Nelson-Hall; Chicago.** The point: it takes more than just a pretty smile and a firm handshake. But do charismatic people read books like this?

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Physician, Heal Thyself—

That American society is vile, unequal, unjust, and unfair is by now a sort of commonplace, a once-and-for-ever fixed obviousness, as self-evident as the presence of McDonald's hamburgers and Coca-Cola. The trite naturalness of this characterization has been driven into the popular consciousness by the omnipotent and omnipresent liberal media. And no other power of the American universe has more intensely flailed, flagellated, and badmouthed us for our wicked racism than the editors, columnists, and anchormen of liberal persuasion who rule the media empire. Now, we can read in a UPI release:

> Fifteen years ago the Kerner Commission said newspapers were shockingly backward in the recruiting and promoting of blacks.
>
> Five years ago the American Society of Newspaper Editors set the year 2000 as a target for making American newsrooms proportionately representative of the nation's racial and ethnic groups.
>
> During the five years the minority percentage on daily newspapers has gone only from 4 percent to 5.6 percent, or 2,800 reporters. . . . Sixty percent of the dailies have no nonwhite reporter, and growth has been flat in 1983.

That the liberal media are the chief liars and hypocrites of contemporary America is by now an unequivocal banality. Everybody knows it. However, this simple truth cannot be made public. For obvious reasons. □

Notables

Barnum & Bagels

Whether one considers Darwin a sinner or a saint, the concept of evolution, which he effectively popularized, is one that underlies virtually all aspects of daily living, with the possible exception of religion, and even there it is evident that there is an increasing emphasis on modernization (i.e., "evolving" with the times) and a consequent devaluation of tradition. "They" may not make cars or ice cream or anything else "like they used to," but it must be admitted that an electronic ignition is a vast improvement over a starting crank and that a carton of Häagen-Dazs in the fridge beats about with an ice cream machine's crank. The "standard of living" may be improving, but the standards of *life* seem to be winding down into a vast sewer. This assertion straddles the two defining terms of Patrick Bratlinger's *Bread & Circuses: Theories of Mass Culture as Social Decay* (Cornell University Press; Ithaca, NY): "positive classicism" and "negative classicism." The former, which doesn't get much ink, refers to consulting the past for a touchstone, or cultural paradigm. The latter, *the* concern, refers to making comparisons of "modern society with Roman imperial decadence." Bratlinger is forthcoming with his objective—"My chief purpose is to provide a critique of the mythology of negative classicism as it has developed over the last two centuries in relation to 'mass culture': the mass media, journalism, mass education, the cultural effects of the processes of democratization and industrialization"—yet he never gets around to it.

Instead, he merely provides a compendium of practically all the writers and social theorists who let loose with the phrase *"panem et circenses"* during a weak moment of composition, from Juvenal to McLuhan. He repeats it or a variation over and over again, and it is surprising that he doesn't cite the saw "If you can't ride two horses at once, you shouldn't be in the circus," nor Murphy's "Buttered bread falls buttered side down—and if it's a sandwich it falls open." Bratlinger seems to think that all those who referred to the decadence of their day or to the existence of "cultural barbarians" were not only incorrect, but crabby. He, through Marxist Raymond Williams, shivers with the *frisson* of possibility: the mass media, if used as he sees fit (but which he never explains), will aid in "the construction of a shared culture of the highest humanistic and creative value on a mass, even global scale," and the bouquets go to what we have and the Romans didn't: TV. Bratlinger, in effect, makes Pangloss appear to be a pessimist. Perhaps he was so busy with his nose in books while running down the multitudinous citations that he hasn't taken a look at reality—or even TV—lately. □

Une Petite Crapule

This is to pay honor to the genius of French language as the most expressible of tools. No other tongue approximates its precision in articulating contempt for human sleaziness and despicability. There are many delicious and delicate French denominations that English lacks but which would help us convey *our* image of one Alexander Cockburn, a British red snob of quasi-aristocratic lineage, a New York bedroom revolutionist, and a fellow traveler columnist for both the *Village Voice* and—oh, how intriguing!—the *Wall Street Journal*. *Une ordure? Une canaille?* Each one of these epithets defines exactly how *we* feel, but, apparently they clash with what the editor of the *VV* thinks of Mr. Cockburn. Of late, Mr. Cockburn accepted some peculiarly scented Arab money to write a book about Israel. Judging by what he previously wrote on the subject, as well as about every democratic force engaged in the struggle against any vicious fanaticism on the Soviet payroll, Mr. Cockburn was probably out to make another routine propagandist kill, financed by a slush fund. The *VV*, an organ that lives off New York radical and mostly Jewish readership, couldn't go so far in offending subcon-

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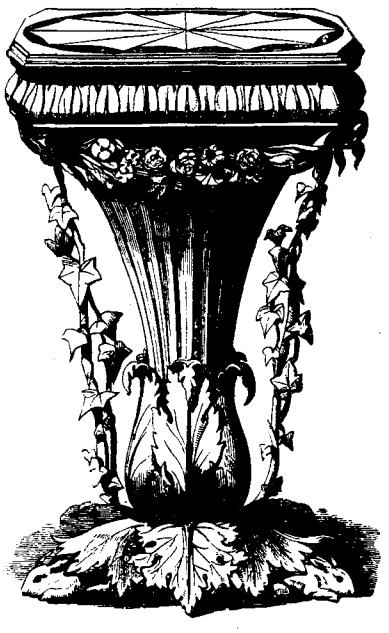
scious sympathies; besides, Mr. Rupert Murdoch, the Australian money-grabber who owns the paper, knows where his income comes from and would never allow it to go unattended. So Mr. Cockburn was fired under the pretext that he does not live up to the standards of the *Village Voice's* journalistic integrity—a singularly exhilarating oxymoron. Yet, in his send-off note, the *VV* editor-in-chief wrote:

> For 10 years, Cockburn has distinguished himself as a brilliant writer, an original thinker, and an independent voice at this newspaper.

Original? What's original in the worn-out post-Stalinism, and in argumentation that maintains that all moral stench emanates from Pennsylvania Avenue addresses and all moral beauty oozes from the Kremlin? (Inhabitants of the latter may occasionally commit an excusable *faux pas*—gulag, purge trials, genocides, enslaving entire countries—but never historical crimes like giving Europe the Marshall Plan or trying to save Vietnam from totalitarian slaughter.) Already during the 1930's, the Moscow-printed instructions for the Popular Front dialectics taught writers how to call anything the Soviets did (and "progressives" in the West might not like) "forgivable mistakes" or "tormenting necessities" or "bothersome oversights" or "immature mishandling." Mr. Cockburn still uses all those vulgar, agitprop euphemisms with full abandon. He is one of those who deem all the uprisings in Eastern Europe as fomented by and shaped to the advantage of right-wingers, and who always, everywhere finds a hospital bombarded by U.S. planes and a little girl tenderly taken care of by North Vietnamese commandos, Russian butchers in Afghanistan, or Salvadoran guerillas. What's original in ascribing all ethical evil to the Knesset and all ethical beauty to Arafat and his henchmen, all sweet reasonableness to Nicaraguan Marxist gangsters, and all ape-like instincts to the State Department? In the 1940's, Zhdanov, Stalin's chief agitprop foreman, distributed manuals on how to practice this kind of journalism for use in the West, and Mr.



Cockburn seems to have treasured a well-earmarked booklet up to these days. If *independence* means to voice putrid sociopolitical tenets and "ideals" that since 1918 have brought nothing but destruction of basic human rights and freedoms, oppression, and destitution to almost half of the world, he surely is "independent." *Brilliant?* It's certainly more glitzy to write this kind of copy after a dinner at *Lutèce,* financed by the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, than from Sofia or Leningrad, where most of Mr. Cockburn's British ideological kin was or is forced, by cruel circumstances, to enjoy life as payment for services rendered. But in his rejoinder to the *VV* editor who fired him, he writes about an America in which: "extremely conservative cultural and political norms [are] prevailing today." This at a time when *Silkwood* is considered by all establishment critics a cinematic masterpiece, runs on Broadway, and is distributed by all commercial chains throughout the country. And when New York establishment publishers turn down manuscripts simply because the authors exhibit a conservative bent. If this is "brilliance" only *VV* editors seem to be blinded by it. □

To Our Readers

Professor Richard Duncan of the University of Nebraska has asked for assistance in learning of any literary references in connection with his teaching and research interest in the law of abortion. If you have knowledge of appropriate references, please contact:

Professor Richard F. Duncan
University of Nebraska
College of Law
Lincoln, NE 68583-0902 □

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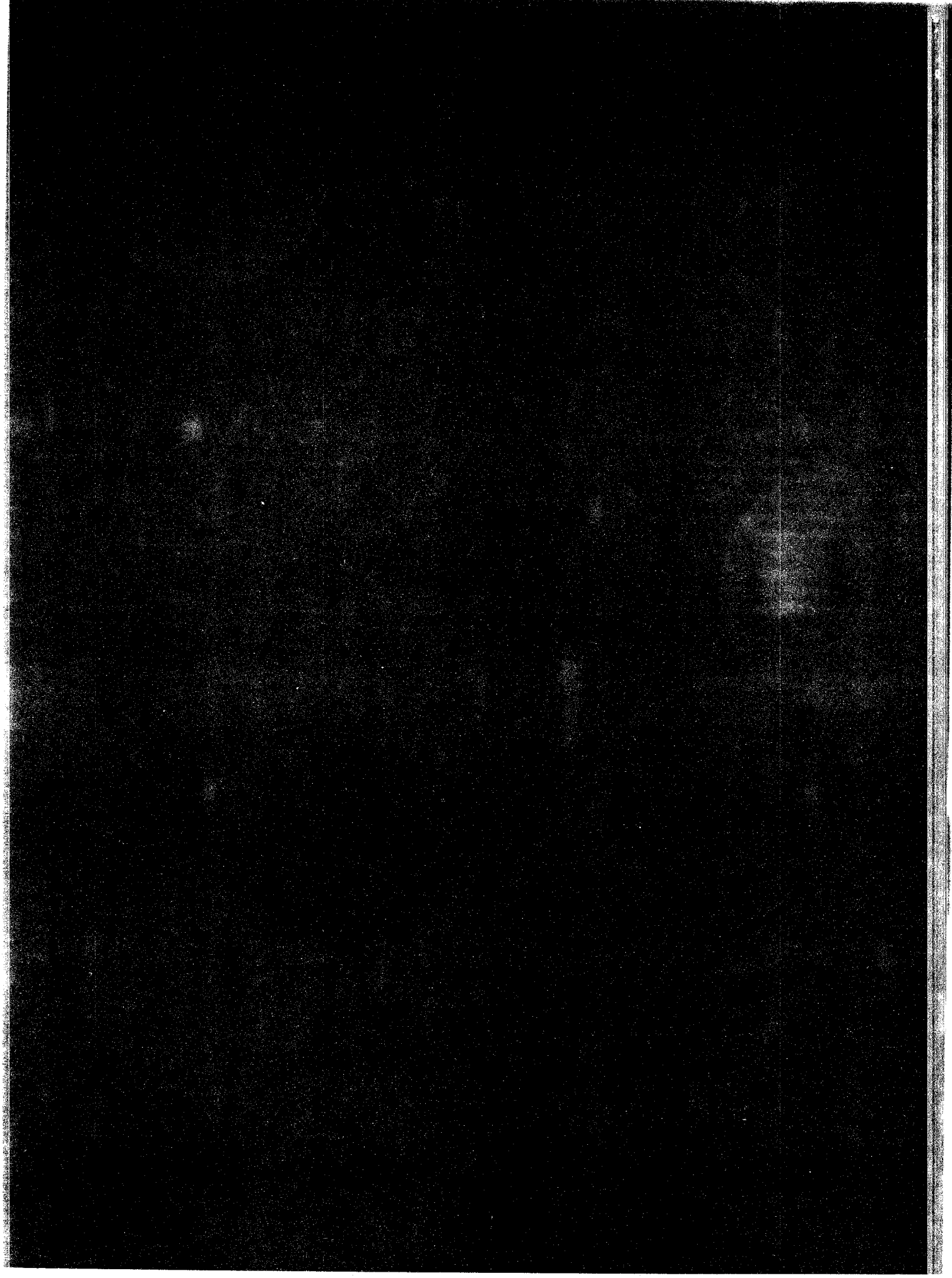

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